

TOWARDS PRINCIPLED INFLUENCE:  
AN OVERVIEW OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1943-1948

by

Peter Michael Boehm



Doctor of Philosophy  
University of Edinburgh

1983

**BLANK IN ORIGINAL**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . . (v)

ABSTRACT OR SUMMARY . . . . . (vii)

PROLOGUE . . . . . 1

CHAPTER

I. THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS . . . . . 4

II. THE FUNCTIONALIST IDEAL . . . . . 36

III. TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, 1943-44 . . . . . 63

IV. THE UNITED NATIONS . . . . . 110

V. THE COMMONWEALTH: A COMMON POLICY AND CONSULTATION . . 156

VI. THE NEW COMMONWEALTH . . . . . 193

VII. CONTINENTALISM AND AMERICAN HEMISPHERICS . . . . . 229

VIII. PEACE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION . . . . . 274

IX. EPILOGUE: NEW COMMITMENTS NOW NECESSARY . . . . . 312

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . . 336

*Auream quisquis mediocritatem Diliget.*

- Horace



#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As is frequent with any overview of a given subject, themes, scope and intent often evolve in a manner over which the author is helpless to exercise much control. This study was not exempt from such evolution, in that what was originally intended to be a succinct analysis of Canada's role in the creation of the United Nations, became a more complex appraisal of Canadian foreign policy during these years. Through its broad nature, therefore, this dissertation acts as a microcosm of the multifarious policy it attempts to describe. In guiding and encouraging me to widen the historical panorama, I am deeply indebted to the late Dr. Philip Wigley, a man who much more than a supervisor, was a scholar and friend. It was a singular and memorable privilege to have been his pupil. I am also grateful to Professor George Shepperson for maintaining continuity in the supervisory role and the encouragement he offered during my stay in Edinburgh. I might add that he continued to furnish assistance along well-established North Atlantic lines thereafter.

There are several individuals who merit my most hearty thanks for invaluable assistance cheerfully provided during the research phase of this paper. In particular, I wish to mention Messrs. Carman Carroll and Glenn Wright of the Public Archives of Canada and Dacre Cole of the Historical Division of the Department of External Affairs. I also wish to collectively thank those distinguished gentlemen whose names surface both in the text and footnotes of this study, who agreed to sit patiently for interviews, and who thus provided a rich *ambiance* which cannot always be gleaned from documentary sources. Today it is with humility and pride that I am an apprentice in a profession in which they excelled. Also deserving special recognition is Tonia Kelly for her fine typing of the final product. Three years of study in Edinburgh, London and Ottawa were facilitated by a Commonwealth Scholarship administered by the British Council and the Association of Commonwealth Universities. I wish to renew my gratitude.

On a more personal note, this study represents the culmination of aspirations held by my parents, Michael and Anna. Their moral support and faith will be forever cherished. I would also like to thank my mother-in-law, Dorothea Wayand, for providing me with a pleasant place to work on the latter portions of the paper. For Julia, who entered my life as this study began, its completion is undoubtedly a cause for relief, for now, at her own peril, she will have a full-time husband.

P.M.B.

Ottawa, July 1983.

## ABSTRACT OR SUMMARY

This study attempts to provide an overview of Canadian foreign policy during the years 1943 to 1948. Canada's aspiration for an influential global role proportionate to its wartime contributions, known as the functional principle, merits close attention in serving as the basis for Canada's approach to renewed international organization during this period. Hence, Canada's involvement in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, the Chicago International Civil Aviation Conference and particularly in the creation of the United Nations exemplify the extent and application of this new philosophy, as well as its successes and failures. A maturation from the idealism voiced in 1943 to the more sober pragmatism evident by 1948 is noted. The evolving relationship with the United Kingdom is analyzed, the focus being on the nature and evolution of the Commonwealth consultative process, together with the viability of a common foreign and defence policy. Changes in the Commonwealth as an association through the admission of newly independent members are considered. Another major theme is the significance of Canada's relations with the United States as approached from the perspectives of political influence and continental integration. Canada's increasing awareness of other nations in the hemisphere, as well as the expansion of both the Department of External Affairs and the Canadian presence abroad are also reviewed. By the final chapters, it is evident that through the advent of peace in Europe, the necessity of a multilateral effort for its reconstruction, and ultimately through the creation of the North Atlantic Alliance, a traditional tenet of Canadian policy, the "North Atlantic Triangle", is maintained, but in a realigned form. Canadian policy in response to these issues, therefore, through a combination of its functional principle and a good amount of "enlightened self-interest" helped to elevate Canada to a position of influence within the ranks of the "middle" powers. Throughout this study, the emphasis is less on political events than on the making of Canadian policy through the ideas and craft of the protagonists, be they astute politicians such as William Lyon Mackenzie King or those individuals resident in his Department of External Affairs. A selected bibliography follows.



## PROLOGUE

Canadian historiography, we are informed by a scholar of rank, has exhibited a concentration on nationality and constitutional development, which, in the period after the Second World War, was broadened to encompass a "record of Canadian achievement as a model of co-operative international relations."<sup>1</sup> Lest the reader believe that this author tends to pursue these traditional lines with overt zeal, or worse, falls prey to the temptation to write "Whig" history, it should be emphasized at the outset that any overview by its very nature suggests a progression of developments through time.

In the study of Canadian foreign policy, the decade following the Second World War has acquired reverential status, largely for the fact that Canada played an almost disproportionately influential role in world councils during this period. The first five years of this decade, if, as in this study, one chooses to start in 1943, do not qualify for the "from colony to nation" approach but nonetheless indicate a remarkable progression towards the realization

---

1. Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History, Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing, 1900-1970*, (Toronto, 1976), p. 260.

of Canadian foreign policy goals. What was induced, according to a consummate practitioner of diplomacy during the period, came not as a result "of any delusions of grandeur, or of overweening ambition" on Canada's part, but of "an intelligent understanding of her own enlightened self-interest."<sup>2</sup> What follows is an attempt to describe, characterize and define this understanding, not so much through a meticulous illustration of political developments, all of which have already been adequately examined, but through an analysis of the making of policy as practised by those associated with the Department of External Affairs.

The evolution and progress depicted in the ensuing pages is in large measure demonstrated by the rapid growth of this ministry. From its very formation in 1909 until the outbreak of the Second World War, the Department of External Affairs was frequently little more than a clearing bureau for the prime ministerial despatches which then characterized the Imperial relationship and thus more or less represented the totality of Canada's external relations, with the notable exception of Canada's symbiotic relationship with the United States. Indeed the Prime Minister himself served as Secretary of State for External Affairs until late 1946, not only because of the gravity of matters of state, but out of convenience, as there was simply not enough work to justify the appointment of another minister.

Following the assumption of the role of Under-Secretary by historian O.D. Skelton in 1925, the Department began to attract men cast from a similar mould: skilled, dedicated and modest intellectuals with a strong but not woolly sense of nationalism. Lester Pearson, Norman Robertson and Hume Wrong were among the first chosen by Dr. Skelton. Their policy recommendations, perspectives and hopes fill this text, not for reasons of prosaic value, but because these men perhaps more than others in similar stations since managed to achieve a substantial amount of influence over the creation of policy. This authority and prominence became most perceptible with the onset of various plans for international organizations in 1943, the articula-

---

2. Pearson Papers, vol. 20, file "Speeches - San Francisco 1945", speech by Lester Pearson, "Canada in World Affairs", broadcast over CBC radio from the San Francisco Conference, 1 July 1945.



tion of the "functional principle" in that same year as the *raison d'être* of Canadian policy and continued, albeit in a constantly changing manner, until well after the formation of the North Atlantic Alliance in 1948-49 and the departure of Pearson for a public career as minister of the department in which he had spent his formative years.

Canadian policy between the wars had been characterized by the "no commitments" philosophy and cautious liberalism of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King. His pervasive presence persisted well into the 1940s, and although the liberal side of the man recognized the need for strong international organization with collective security, the astute political facets of his complex character on numerous occasions assumed dominance. However by 1939 the world, and with it Canada, had changed immeasurably. The Statute of Westminster of 1931 had granted Canada and the other Dominions *de jure* responsibility to conduct their own foreign relations, the great depression of these years tendered new poignancy to the phrase "international economic cooperation", and the maelstrom refused to disperse over Europe. The League of Nations, which during the hiatus of Versailles had been foreseen as a panacea for all that was ill between nations, did not include the world's most powerful country, could and would not exercise suasion to deter others from resorting to aggression to settle their differences, and did not accord eminence to the aspirations of smaller powers. Canada, like most other countries, did not wish to return to the *status quo* following the second global confrontation, and sought ways and means which would assure lasting peace.

As the chapters below will endeavour to demonstrate through their consideration of various policy areas, Canadian efforts to have a voice in the new world order represented a dichotomy of idealism and pragmatism, with more idealism apparent at the beginning and more pragmatism evident at the conclusion of the five years in question. In the interval, Canadian policy became at once principled and influential. Self-interest was of course extant, and was eventually joined by enlightenment through a dialectical interaction between successes and failures, idealistic notions and the rebuffs of reality.

## CHAPTER I

### THE DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

The Department of External Affairs officially went to war in 1943. The status of being a "war department" - and therefore able to receive additional funds - had been denied it since the beginning of the war, since the Department was, in the eyes of the Treasury Board, not completely occupied with war-related work. By June of 1943, however, an exemption for hiring was granted for special cases where it could be ascertained that the position entailed "substantial added responsibilities and increased duties."<sup>1</sup> A collective sigh of relief rose to the rafters of the East Block.

By the beginning of the war, there were Canadian diplomatic missions in London, Washington, Paris, Tokyo, the Hague, Brussels and Geneva. By early 1943 only those in the United States and the

---

1. Department of External Affairs, Personnel Records, vol. 678, file 134, W. Ronson to the Under-Secretary, 1 June 1943; and Don Page, "Coping with a War: The Experience of the Canadian Department of External Affairs", paper presented at an international conference on "The Second World War as a National Experience", (Ottawa, November 14-16, 1979), p.3.

United Kingdom were active, but by the end of the year eleven missions had been established. These were in addition to the High Commissions which Canada had established in the sister Dominions of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and, at least ostensibly, Ireland, just before the outbreak of hostilities in 1939. In 1948, Canada would have diplomatic or consular representation in thirty-seven different countries. Thirty-three diplomatic officers were employed by the Department in 1939; this would swell to one hundred and thirty-two by mid-1946.<sup>2</sup> The Treasury Board exemption did not allow for wide recruitment, but did provide an opportunity for the Department to hire "special temporary assistants", who were usually academics well-known to the Robertson-Pearson-Wrong triumvirate.

Policy was safely in the hands of Norman Robertson, who, by exhibiting the Skeltonian qualities of anonymity and lack of overt ambition, was chosen by Mackenzie King to assume the office of Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs following Skelton's death in 1941. In spite of wishing to modernize and change the organization of the Department, Robertson did not in fact manage to alter significantly the "graduate seminar" system so dear to his predecessor. This was largely because of the insistence of the Prime Minister, who as Head of the Department, felt compelled to examine every detail, from the installation of telephones in offices to the quality of the silver plate for the High Commission in Canberra. Lester Pearson analyzed the situation clearly while on one of his frequent Ottawa forays from Washington in early 1943: "After lunch, Hume and I went to the Department, where we had a long and somewhat desultory session with the Under-Secretary, who is as worried and harassed as ever. It is the same old problem - that of organization. At present, everything is confusion up there, and will remain so . . ."<sup>3</sup>

According to Hume Wrong, this state of affairs had not improved three years later when he became Canadian ambassador in Washington. He put the case to Robertson very frankly:

---

2. DEA, General Registry File 300B(s), memorandum "Diplomatic Staff", August 1943; also Hume Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 24, "Probable Expansion of Canadian Missions Abroad and Department of External Affairs", 5 February 1943.

3. Pearson Diary, 10 January 1943.



Among the first essentials is a firm resolution on your own part, which must be backed by the efforts of your personal staff, to prevent the accumulation in your office of papers which are awaiting an opportunity that often cannot arise for you to examine them. I should like to see the whole apparatus of baskets filled with waiting papers swept away and the office adorned with no more paper than that which you require for the work immediately in hand. A mere resolution on your part will, of course, not achieve this end without changes in practice, which must, if they are to succeed, be applied consistently and even ruthlessly.<sup>4</sup>

The "baskets filled with waiting papers" were Robertson's trademark and the manifestation of the system which functioned best for him: creative delay. Papers, memoranda and despatches were only utilized if the current outlook warranted their use; if not, they turned to humus in Robertson's baskets. This practice did not always stimulate the morale of junior men, who often toiled long hours in the preparation, for example, of memoranda concerned with post-hostilities planning. Ironically, Robertson's method was sometimes justified, as the rapid flow of events rendered many papers redundant. Wrong also stressed in his memorandum that the Under-Secretary was too accessible; he should cultivate a position of aloofness by not always responding to telephone calls when he was in conference in his office. The barrier between the Under-Secretary and individual members of the Department should be made more formidable so as to avoid Robertson becoming a repository for individual claims and grievances. Wrong recommended that a position of personal assistant or private secretary to the Under-Secretary should be created - much in the British tradition - in order to direct cable traffic and take minutes of the discussions in his office. These recommendations were not acted upon because on 4 September 1946, Robertson was appointed High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, Wrong became ambassador to the United States, Pearson returned from Washington to become Under-Secretary, and of greatest significance, Louis St. Laurent was named Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Pearson appeared wary of the responsibilities of the new position. "If I should go to the Dep[artmen]t", he wrote Robertson, "I will be in a very tough spot. After all, you and Hume have taken

---

4. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 24, "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary; Organization of the Under-Secretary's Office", 8 May 1946; also interview with George Ignatieff, 2 December 1980.

a beating, but there have, at least, been two of you - I would have no one like either of you to help. I would be new, and I would have the PM in his declining difficult months!"<sup>5</sup> The Under-Secretaryship was, however, what Pearson had always coveted, and he welcomed the opportunity of dealing directly with St. Laurent, the bright star in the Liberal galaxy. Theirs would become a partnership between politician and civil servant which has since been unrivalled in Canada.

But Mackenzie King was omnipresent. "I can assure you, however," Arnold Heeney, the Secretary to the Cabinet, wrote Robertson in London, "that you would find nothing strange in coming back to the East Block, under the new regime. St. Laurent's absence in New York has prevented any sense of division, so that the central problem of relationships with the Prime Minister continues to occupy a large proportion of our time ..."<sup>6</sup> The climax in dealing with the increasingly suspicious Mackenzie King would come in January of 1948 over the issue of Canadian participation in the United Nations Korean Truce Commission, where a Cabinet schism involving St. Laurent, J.L. Ilsley, and Mackenzie King was only narrowly avoided.

Coping with the foibles of the Prime Minister during the last five years of his tenure was expedited by the close interaction of the Prime Minister's Office with the Department of External Affairs. J.W. Pickersgill, Gordon Robertson and James A. Gibson all entered the Prime Minister's Office as secretaries from the Department. Pickersgill became Mackenzie King's leading political adviser, Gordon Robertson worked in the office at the East Block and Gibson was styled "External Affairs Liaison Officer" at Laurier House. Their perceptions of their roles in their day-to-day contact with the Prime Minister are consistent. Pickersgill learned very quickly "that Mackenzie King would use everybody as a doormat who would lie down"; Robertson has mentioned playing "the interesting little game of applied psychology"; and Gibson recalls the most difficult problem as "getting him to make up his mind".<sup>7</sup> In spite of King's indecisiveness, or perhaps because of

---

5. Norman Robertson Papers, vol. 2, Pearson to Robertson, 30 May 1946.

6. Arnold Heeney Papers, vol. 1, Heeney to Robertson, 30 November 1946.

7. Interviews with J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980; Gordon Robertson, 4 June 1980; and James A. Gibson, 25 June 1980.



it, he was an exacting taskmaster who expected nothing less than perfection. His voluminous diaries of the period are filled with statements indicating his annoyance at the "E.A. room" at Laurier House being locked and empty in the late evening and at the delays and irksome habits exhibited by his secretaries. More External Affairs work such as the drafting of cables and letters was accomplished on late Saturday afternoons than during the entire week, and the Secretaries had to be at their desks until the Prime Minister was content.<sup>8</sup> Procrastination likewise accounted for the fact that the estimates of the Department were often only brought before the House of Commons in the dying hours of a session, thereby making coordinated planning an almost impossible task.

An additional influence on the Department of External Affairs was the policy-making input provided by senior officials from other departments. Clifford Clark, the long-serving Deputy Minister of Finance who had King's respect, and Graham Towers, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, were not only instrumental in consultation involving economic matters but also proffered advice on the United Nations and the Paris Peace Conference. Arnold Heeney, the Secretary to the Cabinet and Clerk of the Privy Council, virtually assumed sole responsibility for policy questions concerned with the American military presence in Northwestern Canada and also chaired the inter-departmental committee on atomic energy. He would inherit the mantle of Under-Secretary from Pearson upon the latter's elevation to the Cabinet as Secretary of State for External Affairs in the last months of 1948.

Influences from other departments should not be perceived as being anything extraordinary. It must be realized that Ottawa's senior mandarins were both intellectually and socially very close during this period. The Privy Council Office and the Department of External Affairs were housed in the East Block and interdepartmental corridor discussions together with working luncheons in the Chateau Laurier cafeteria were frequent. Moreover, the informality of inter-departmental liaison often allowed for a system which both appealed to the Prime Minister - when he was in one of his better moods - and could induce speedier Cabinet sanction.

---

8. Mackenzie King Diary, 23 March 1943; also interview with James A. Gibson, 25 June 1980.

Although the Department had been faced with a number of organizational difficulties immediately following the death of Skelton in 1941, and had seen several unsuccessful attempts on the part of Hugh Keenleyside,<sup>9</sup> the Assistant Under-Secretary, to consolidate all Canadian foreign services in one department, by 1945 the structural organization of the Department was relatively sound. Under-Secretary Norman Robertson and Associate Under-Secretary Hume Wrong worked in concert and as a conduit directly under Mackenzie King. Wrong headed three political divisions which respectively included international organization and peace settlements; European, Commonwealth, Middle Eastern and African affairs; and political affairs relating to the United States, Latin America and the Far East. A Diplomatic Division was responsible for representative functions and John Read, the durable Legal Adviser, headed the Legal Division.<sup>10</sup> Of significance was the Economic Division, under H.F. Angus, who had been brought into the Department as a Special Assistant in late 1944 after "war status" had been attained. Angus was expected to return to his position at the University of British Columbia after the war, which he did, and as a result he was not included in the discussions of high policy. John Deutsch, another Special Assistant in his division, was lured away by the Department of Finance after demonstrating his negotiating prowess at Bretton Woods. Here was a serious lacuna in the Department which seemed odd, considering that Robertson himself had such great personal experience and interest in trade and finance.<sup>11</sup>

As the Department and its role in the national fabric expanded, an Information Division was acquired by late 1944. Although the dissemination of information on international affairs had been ably conducted by the Wartime Information Board, planning had to be cognizant of future possibilities after the Board's dissolution. Some, including officials in the Department of Trade and Commerce and Vin-

---

9. Page, "Coping with a War: The Experience of the Canadian Department of External Affairs", pp. 8-9.

10. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 242, file 2454, memorandum, "Organization of the Department of External Affairs", 2 January 1945; cf. also, John E. Read, "Problems of an External Affairs Legal Adviser, 1928-1946", *International Journal* XXII, No. 3, (Summer 1967), pp. 376-394.

11. For Robertson's great abilities as a trade negotiator, see J.L. Granatstein, *A Man of Influence: Norman A. Robertson and Canadian Statecraft 1929-68*, (Toronto, 1981), pp. 56-79.



cent Massey, Canada's High Commissioner in London, believed that an expansive Information Division should become a Canadian-styled British Council, promoting both cultural and academic exchanges.<sup>12</sup> Robertson and others were cool to the idea, arguing that it would be better for an Information Division to "frequently employ its left hand instead of leading with its chin."<sup>13</sup> The division did not assume the noble function envisioned by Vincent Massey, but it grew in importance, and during the month of October 1947 alone, it handled over 1600 enquiries from within Canada.<sup>14</sup> Its exact function was never clearly defined, however, and this occasioned much fractious debate within the Department.<sup>15</sup>

Administration was another matter. Agnes McCloskey, who had been with the Department since its inception in 1909, regarded the offices as her personal fiefdom and often subjected pencil-seeking officers to stern lectures on the value of government property. She was effectively - and diplomatically - removed from the Department in 1943 by being appointed to New York as Canada's first woman consul. When news of her appointment reached Washington, Pearson rejoiced: "For anyone who has had to pry expense accounts out of her the significance of this move will be obvious. In the Legation, it overshadowed all the war news; even the advance of the 8th Army had to take second place."<sup>16</sup> W.D. Matthews then entered the Department as Administrative Officer and quickly set to work, establishing various departmental committees which were to assist in coordinating administrative policy.

If the Department of External Affairs was to both represent

---

12. DEA, File 7326-40, W.B. Herbert, Executive Secretary of the "Canadian Committee", to Robertson, 18 February 1945; also King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 366, despatch A712, Massey to King, 18 December 1944.

13. DEA File 7326-40; W.B. Herbert to Robertson, 18 February 1945.

14. DEA, File 9686-40C, memorandum, "Information Division", n.d. (1947).

15. "...there have been greater difficulties in regard to the conceptions of what an Information Division should do and how it should do it. We are not out of the woods in this regard yet, and will not be able to make any final decisions as to functions and personnel in the Division until we see the attitude taken by the House of Commons to our Information Estimates." Pearson Papers, vol. 8, Pearson to Robertson, 5 April 1947.

16. Pearson Diary, 9 April 1943.

Canada abroad and formulate international policies which reflected national interests, how would the French Canadian fact be interwoven into the Department, particularly at the policy-making level? Ottawa during the war was not the bilingual and bicultural capital of today. English was the *lingua franca* and any French Canadian who wished to enter the Civil Service had to be very proficient in English and willing to live in an alien environment. Norman Robertson had often applied his fertile mind to this vexing question and was, at various times during his tenure as Under-Secretary, seriously contemplating having a French Canadian as his successor. There were, however, no qualified French Canadians available to fill the position during wartime. Senior representatives such as General Georges Vanier and Pierre Dupuy were heavily engaged in their representations to the Allied governments in exile in London, and Jean Désy in Brazil was the senior Canadian diplomat in Latin America. By 1947, Laurent Beaudry, who had served in the Department as long as Robertson and was head of the Diplomatic Division, was ailing and did not have Mackenzie King's confidence in his abilities. Dupuy and Désy in particular were known to succumb to the blandishments of diplomatic life abroad, and only made short excursions to Ottawa from Montreal when they were in the country.

When Désy was offered the position of Under-Secretary to succeed Pearson when the latter was elevated to the Cabinet in 1948, he indicated his views in a memorandum which asserted that the reorganization of the Department under a distinct minister made it imperative to follow the practice established by other governments, to have a head of mission return and serve for a time as Under-Secretary. "The Department would thus have the benefit of their experience and at the same time bring them back into contact with the Canadian problems as seen from a Canadian angle."<sup>17</sup> Further, Désy suggested that salaries should therefore be calculated on the same basis as for those abroad and a large house should be bought for the Under-Secretary where he could both live and entertain visiting dignitaries. Even a new minister such as St. Laurent was not impressed by the latter argument. The senior French Canadians were therefore left abroad, where it was felt that they were happiest and

---

17. Pearson Papers, Vol. 1, (pre-1958 Series), Pearson to Robertson, 17 March 1947.



where they handled their representative duties with experienced expertise.

The French-Canadian problem did not solely exist at the upper levels. A confidential memorandum directed to St. Laurent in January of 1948 indicated that of 161 officers only 33 were French Canadians and that of 28 heads of mission there were 9, demonstrating that there was a smaller proportion of French Canadians at the lower levels. Of those at the junior levels, there appeared to be a higher percentage of French Canadians in the Administration and Information Divisions but fewer in the Political and Economic Divisions. The recommendations of the memorandum were emphatically stated: "S'il est désiré que quelques Canadiens de langue française puissent exercer une certaine influence au sein des divisions politiques, économiques et juridiques du ministère à Ottawa, il me semble opportun d'inviter quelques jeunes hommes compétents à entrer au ministère."<sup>18</sup> The Department of External Affairs gradually became an example to other government departments and agencies in representing the duality of Canada both at home and abroad, but the significant changes transpired after 1948.<sup>19</sup>

By far the most meaningful change in the Department during these years was the creation of a Cabinet portfolio for External Affairs which, for the first time, would be separate from that of the Prime Minister. It had been long in coming, and as early as 1941, Pearson had written to Massey of his feelings, which were undoubtedly shared by others: "In short, I am encouraged by the views and attitudes of the senior members of the Department - but somewhat discouraged by the political difficulties in the way of translating these views into action. If we only had a Minister of our own!"<sup>20</sup> The war, however, prevented any immediate movement in this direction. Hume Wrong, in his memorandum regarding the organization of the Under-Secretary's office in 1946, candidly admitted that "The appointment of a separate Secretary of State for External Affairs is necessary before a

---

18. St. Laurent Papers, vol. 18, file 100-B-1, "Mémoire re Personnel Du Ministère des Affaires Extérieures", 4 janvier 1948; the authorship is confidential; access granted by permission of J.W. Pickersgill.

19. Interview with John Holmes, 23 July 1980. Jules Leger became the first French Canadian Under-Secretary in 1954.

20. Pearson Papers, vol. 1, Pearson to Massey, 27 May 1941.

number of the most desirable changes can be made..."<sup>21</sup>

In a subsequent memorandum, Norman Robertson made a well-reasoned case to the Prime Minister for the necessity of having a separate minister. The argument used displayed both Robertson's uncanny knowledge of Mackenzie King's mind and his ability to tactfully gauge future responses. Robertson outlined the growth of the Department in recent years, stating that it required more ministerial responsibility now to maintain both the ebb and flow of personnel and the requisite control of the departmental estimates. Although the Department was small when compared to other government departments, it was of a uniform high quality and dealt with much classified material. On the other hand, Robertson argued, the Prime Minister's role would continue to be of great consequence in relations with the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth, since the central link was the Prime Minister to Prime Minister consultative relationship. Similar considerations, of course, pertained to the not always harmonious relations with the United States. The Prime Minister had to closely supervise the conduct of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and the coordination of policy dealing with atomic energy. Furthermore, there was a peculiarly Canadian criterion, and this was that the people and Parliament expected the Prime Minister to take a leading role in the conduct of foreign policy, particularly following the birth of the United Nations. The best solution, Robertson believed, was to appoint a junior minister to the position:

If one of the abler, younger men were appointed to the post, these very limitations upon his responsibilities would facilitate the gradual development of a separate Ministerial Department of External Affairs without interfering, in any way, with the continuity of the main lines of Canadian policy. The load taken from your shoulders should be considerable, but it would not, in itself, be a full load for a first class man.<sup>22</sup>

Hope within the Department rested with Brooke Claxton, the minister of the newly-created Department of National Health and Welfare, former Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, the genius

---

21. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 24, "Organization of the Under-Secretary's Office", 8 May 1946.

22. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 250, private and personal memorandum, Robertson to King, 13 June 1946.



behind recent Liberal electioneering, and an influential member of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs in the 1930s. Indeed, the logic of Robertson's memorandum clearly points to Claxton as a leading candidate for the portfolio. Fate in the form of the Paris Peace Conference intervened, and it was there that Claxton succeeded the Prime Minister as leader of the Canadian delegation. To King, it appeared that Claxton made too many interventions, as if seeking a weighty role for Canada and himself in what was, in essence, a Great Power peace treaty.

After King's well-chronicled<sup>23</sup> despondent return journey from Europe, when the Prime Minister felt that he had been let down by all and sundry, he decided to approach Louis St. Laurent, which he did without the knowledge of his Under-Secretary. The task thus fell to St. Laurent, probably for the reason that he did not seem to want the position. He accepted with the understanding that his service would purely be a stopgap measure from which he could eventually retire and return to his law practice in Quebec. Time and events would prove otherwise.

In fairness to Mackenzie King it must be emphasized that he was not oblivious to trends. In his mind, the key words were always "people and Parliament" and the stress he placed on them when approaching policy questions earned him his longevity in office and the accompanying domestic and international respect. He fully realized that the growth of the Department of External Affairs reflected an enhanced attentiveness on the part of Canadians to international events and that more attention had to be given to this than he himself could offer. King scrutinized the public opinion reports of the Wartime Information Board quite intently, and was acutely aware, for example, that 54% of Canadians polled in June of 1944 desired more information about the government's post-war plans;<sup>24</sup> that by late 1944, 78% of the people

---

23. The more printable aspects of King's despondency may be found in J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Forster, *The Mackenzie King Record*, Vol. 3, 1945-1946, (Toronto, 1970), pp. 330-332; also Arnold D.P. Heeney, *The Things that are Caesar's: Memoirs of a Canadian Public Servant*, pp. 89-90; L.B. Pearson, *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson*, Vol. 1, (Toronto, 1972), p. 293. Also interview with James A. Gibson, 25 June 1980.

24. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 427; "Privy Council Office, War Committee Memoranda", Document no. 728, Wartime Information Board Survey no. 38, 3 June 1944.

surveyed were willing to undergo food shortages in order to give food to the liberated people of Europe;<sup>25</sup> and that an astonishing 82% had heard of the United Nations conference at San Francisco three weeks before it convened.<sup>26</sup>

In the Cabinet War Committee, discussions pertaining to international affairs (excluding military) increased from 10% in 1938-9 to 26% in 1943, in terms of discussion time allotted.<sup>27</sup> Several members of the Cabinet War Committee, most notably C.D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions and Supply and later Reconstruction; J.L. Ilesley, the Minister of Finance; and J.L. Ralston, the Minister of National Defence, possessed portfolios which required a maximum amount of international contact. Parliament had also become more sophisticated. Members of both opposition parties had been included in the delegation to the San Francisco Conference and days of yesteryear, when the House of Commons spent twenty-seven minutes on the Munich Crisis in 1936 and over eight hours on an asparagus tariff the next day, seemed gone forever. When King announced the appointment of St. Laurent as Secretary of State for External Affairs to the House of Commons, an opportunity was taken by the Opposition to resoundingly criticize the Prime Minister's conduct of foreign policy.<sup>28</sup> It would never have happened several years earlier. General debates on foreign policy had never been a feature of the House of Commons; any discussions had been ultimately tied to debates on treaties or obligations arising from membership in the League of Nations. A general debate on foreign policy however took place on 4 July 1947 and eighteen members participated. In the April 1948 debate on foreign policy, thirty members spoke over a period of four days. A House of Commons Standing Committee on

---

25. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 427; "Privy Council Office, War Committee Memoranda", Document no. 956, Wartime Information Board Survey no. 58, 10 March 1945.

26. *Ibid.*, Document no. 966, Wartime Information Board Survey no. 59, 24 March 1945.

27. Privy Council Office Records, vol. 35, file C-10-3-G, W.E. Halliday to Arnold Heeney, 2 December 1943.

28. The British felt that the Standing Committee did thorough work. Foreign Office, FO 371, W9002/102/68, Eleanor Emery to Godfrey Boyd-Shannon, 29 August 1946; for more on the parliamentary aspects of External Affairs, see R. Barry Farrell, "The Planning of Foreign Policy in Canada", *World Politics* 1, (April 1949), pp. 351-380.



External Affairs was called into being in 1945 and by 1947 a Parliamentary Assistant to the Secretary of State for External Affairs had been appointed to relieve the beleaguered Minister of some of his parliamentary work. It was a period of intense activity in a burgeoning Department.

\* \* \*

Venant de ce pays qu'illustre le Castor,  
Nous affectons partout de simples habitudes,  
Passant indécorés sous toutes latitudes.<sup>29</sup>

Canadian diplomats were indeed travelling through all latitudes. At times it appeared as if the requirements of international representation greatly outdistanced the available resources. Representation abroad was of course essential, since Canada aspired to a legitimate position in the front ranks of the secondary states, or "middle powers" as they gradually became known in the jargon of 1944. In retrospect, the question might well be asked whether Canadian representation in so many countries, particularly those of Latin America, was in fact required. There seemed to be a necessity at the time and representation became one method of attaining an end which was even then a nebulous concept: international status.

In a Cabinet War Committee meeting of 10 November 1943, in which diplomatic representation was discussed, Mackenzie King submitted a recommendation to elevate the Canadian legation in Washington to an embassy. This action had, according to the Prime Minister, been favoured by President Roosevelt, had received agreement from Prime Minister Churchill, and it was deemed favourable to raise the legations in the Soviet Union, China and Brazil to similar rank with Belgium and the Netherlands to follow at a later date.<sup>30</sup> Robertson had elucidated the position on 12 September: "When we have Haiti represented by Ambassadors throughout the American continents and a country as small as Norway represented by Ambassadors in Washington and London, there is not much to be said for preserving an artificial distinction which now serves only to create an impression of inferiority

---

29. Heeney Papers, vol. 1, file "Clerk of the Privy Council, 1947 to 1949", extract from a sonnet composed by Jean Désy, Canadian Ambassador to Brazil, Désy to Heeney, 10 March 1947.

30. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, "Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee", P.C. 8699, 10 November 1943.

which is not justified in fact." Furthermore, the United States was planning on elevating all its legations which through diplomatic reciprocity would in turn elevate all foreign legations in Washington, an action which would include nations like Iraq and Liberia. "Since this change appears to be inevitable, I should not like to see Canada 'promoted' in this last odd lot", Robertson concluded, "and I think we might better initiate some action ourselves."<sup>31</sup> Vincent Massey in turn informed the British Government of the basis of the Canadian proposal:

While the present proposal with respect to raising the status of the Canadian minister has particular reference to Washington, this action will imply a willingness to extend the change so as to include ultimately, all Canadian ministers abroad. Among other considerations, it is felt that the differences between Ministers and Ambassadors is no longer a real one. There is a clear tendency toward the elimination of Legations in favour of Embassies.<sup>32</sup>

By 1 December 1943, in addition to the legation in the United States, the recently-established missions in Brazil, the Soviet Union, China and Belgium had been elevated to embassies.<sup>33</sup> Relatively slow growth followed, with embassies being established in Chile, Mexico, Peru and a legation in the Netherlands. Between 1946 and 1948 the number of missions nearly doubled to seven High Commissions, fourteen embassies, eight legations, eleven consulates and four missions. There would be comparatively little further growth during the next decade.

One of the drawbacks of such rapid expansion was that foreign nations had established diplomatic missions in Ottawa before Canada had an opportunity to reciprocate. At the end of 1946, for example,

---

31. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 242, file 2454 "Canadian Representatives Abroad, 1940 to 1948", memorandum from Robertson to King, 12 September 1943.

32. Foreign Office, FO371, W16017/2990/68, Massey to Lord Cranborne, 10 November 1943.

33. Historically, since the Congress of Vienna, diplomatic practice has been to exchange agents of the same class, a custom which often indicated a supposed relative importance of relations with different foreign countries. A minister, for example, as head of a legation, though also accredited to the head of state, ranked one step lower in the order of precedence than an ambassador. Exchange of ambassadors was therefore very important to Canadian aspirations of status. See *Sataw's Guide to Diplomatic Practice*, 5th Edition (Edited by Lord Gore-Booth), (London, 1979), pp. 83-85.



Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and Yugoslavia had established legations in Ottawa without any reciprocal courtesies on the part of Canada. This imbalance would be redressed during the next two years, but many countries would be actively discouraged through Canadian corridor diplomacy from establishing diplomatic relations with Canada in the meantime. Evidently Canada was not the only country clamouring for international status.

The British did not share Canadian enthusiasms for embassies. A letter from Sir Patrick Duff, the United Kingdom's Deputy High Commissioner in Ottawa of 9 December 1943 which Robertson incorporated in a memorandum for the Prime Minister, argued that when it came to exchanging missions with Mexico, Peru and Cuba, these countries might propose an exchange of embassies rather than legations. This would be embarrassing for the United Kingdom since it was only represented by legations in these countries. Robertson believed that the attitude of the United Kingdom was understandable, though not quite consistent, since the British decision not to alter the status of its missions during the war was taken in the summer of 1942 just after British legations were raised to embassies in various European countries. What was of greater significance in Robertson's opinion, was that the British view suggested a disposition to perpetuate a formal distinction between embassies and legations.<sup>34</sup>

The representative feature was certainly one of the key reasons for elevating the legation in Washington:

The fact that the British Commonwealth is represented in Washington by one Ambassador and four Ministers, not to mention the Agent General for India, who is shown on the Diplomatic List on the staff of the British Embassy with the rank of Minister, tends to create an impression that the British Ambassador is the leader of the flock who speaks on occasion for them all. This impression is strengthened by the fact that the United Kingdom Embassy, under war conditions, has no less than six Ministers on

---

34. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 242, file 2454, memorandum from Robertson to King, 15 November 1943. Leighton McCarthy, the Canadian Minister in Washington, had originally opposed the idea of elevation because it would indicate Canadian equality with the United Kingdom. Pearson, second-in-command at the legation, had not known of the proposed change. Foreign Office, F0371, W16692/2990/68, Stephen Holmes to Sir John Stephenson, 12 November 1943.

its staff - all given the rank of 'Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary', ie., the same as heads of Dominions' missions.<sup>35</sup>

Although both the British and the Canadians would be loath to admit it, the question of status was in fact inextricably tangled with problems of titles and diplomatic precedence as evinced above. For example, if Lord Halifax was replaced as British Ambassador in the United States, what would transpire if the sovereign wished to convey a message to the President and the Canadian Ambassador was the most senior representative of His Majesty? The new Canadian global role had to be observed through appearance and protocol in order to be respectable. Alfred Rive, the Canadian High Commissioner in New Zealand who was often ignored by European diplomats, vented his frustration in a letter to Pearson in July of 1948: "Please, please make me an Ambassador and I promise you that the Minister for Belgium will be snubbed the same day, or maybe the day before, allowing for the difference in time.... And I won't be referred to as the Trade Commissioner or Mr. Commissioner any more."<sup>36</sup> Changes in the public trappings of diplomacy would be exceedingly slow in coming, and, in the case of High Commissioners being formally designated Ambassadors, has still to occur.

There was of course a different functional view to all of this. United Kingdom embassies, legations and consulates were still conducting some vital Canadian business. Pearson's 1945 Washington diary records his feelings: "It is humiliating in the extreme that Canada, which now bleats so much about its status as a Middle Power, should continue to rely on the United Kingdom Consuls for consular services in this country. It is about time we grew up." The British Consul in Detroit, for example, issued 50 to 100 passports monthly to Canadians. "Nobody seems to care in Ottawa about this anomaly and the Government is quite happy to let the British Government bear the expense of Canadian consular work in the United States."<sup>37</sup> Pearson had

---

35. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 242, file 2454, memorandum from Robertson to King, 12 September 1943.

36. Pearson Papers, vol. 12, (pre-1958 Series), Alfred Rive to Pearson, 13 July 1948.

37. Pearson Diary, 12 April 1945.



also attended a meeting of all British consular officers in the United States one year earlier and discovered to his humiliation, that he was subjected to rather elementary queries about Canada, so that British consuls - who were of good quality, he insisted - could deal with enquiries about Canada which in some instances occupied 75% of their time. This was, Pearson wrote to Robertson, "...one of the worst examples of our reluctance to accept the full responsibilities of the status about which we boast, namely our continued use of British Consuls in places where so much of the work done is Canadian."<sup>38</sup>

Self-reliance was not evident in the transportation of Canadian diplomatic bags either. As late as 1947, the British Foreign Office was carrying approximately one ton of Canadian diplomatic material per month to twenty-two Canadian missions abroad. Canada had offered to contribute to the cost of carriage, but the Foreign Office had apparently felt that the system of accounting involved would be too complicated. A Canadian courier service between Ottawa, New York and Washington was inaugurated later in the year, and this smaller service was offered to the United Kingdom as well as a gesture of gratitude.<sup>39</sup>

The tradition of British consular representatives fulfilling Canadian consular duties made the Department of External Affairs rather complacent about engineering any changes which required both personnel and resource allocations, since hiring of personnel was frozen for most of the war. Besides, the existing system functioned quite satisfactorily, so why change it? Intimations by the Prime Minister to Parliament as early as 1938 that a consular service plan was receiving government attention did not hasten its development. Paradoxically, with needs for consular representation in American commercial centres growing, Canada's first consulates were established, wholly for strategic reasons, in Greenland in 1940 and at St. Pierre and Miquelon in 1941. The first conventional Canadian consulate in

---

38. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 368, Pearson to Robertson, 7 March 1944.

39. It was estimated that British carriage of Canadian diplomatic bags cost the British Government somewhere in the order of \$250,000 annually. St. Laurent Papers, vol. 34, file 275, memorandum from Pearson to St. Laurent, 5 February 1947.

the form of a Consulate-General was established in New York in 1943.<sup>40</sup> Laxness continued, however, and a coordinating conference for all Canadian consular representatives was not held until April 1949. It was the common belief among consuls that a loose relationship between the various offices and Ottawa seemed most practical at the time. The evidence clearly indicates that less consular attention should have been focussed on major questions of policy such as the North Atlantic Pact, the European Recovery Plan and Commonwealth relations and more on activities of a strict bilateral nature such as the St. Lawrence Seaway project and the tariff.<sup>41</sup>

With the naissance of a consular service, Canada was now being represented abroad by what were, in effect, three government services: diplomatic, commercial intelligence (the Trade Commissioner Service) and consular. Consular matters were absorbed in a Consular Division which was created in the Department of External Affairs in 1946. Before this, however, the question of amalgamating all services was reviewed, and an Interdepartmental Committee to study relations between the Departments of External Affairs and Trade and Commerce was established in June 1943. The task set before the Committee was the decision of how the work of the two Departments could be best accomplished without impairing the efficiency of either. The Committee studied the developments which had taken place in other foreign services, most notably in the United States, where complete amalgamation had occurred in 1939. A marked trend toward complete amalgamation of diplomatic and commercial services was observed, even among non-English-speaking countries. The options considered were the complete merger of the

---

40. J.W. Pickersgill is of the view that more consulates should have been established instead of missions of little value in Latin America. Interview with J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980. Pearson favoured combining trade commissions with Consulate-Generals. Pearson Papers, vol. 2, cable WA976, Pearson to Robertson, 22 February 1945. For preludes to consular development, see H. Gordon Skilling, *Canadian Representation Abroad: From Agency to Embassy*, (Toronto, 1945), pp. 256-260.

41. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2124, file "Consular Conference 1949", letters from Edmond Turcotte, Consul General in Chicago to James J. Hurley, Consul in Detroit, 4 November 1948; T.F.M. Newton, Consul in Boston to Hume Wrong, 5 March 1949.



existing External Affairs and Trade Commissioner Services under the administration of a restructured Department of External Affairs with appropriate staff transfers; and administrative reform leading to coordination and cooperation of the services, interchange of personnel, but without either department losing its identity. In lieu of amalgamation, which was recognized as the preferred if distant goal, the latter option was selected, and a Standing Interdepartmental Committee of senior officials was established.<sup>42</sup>

Robertson sent a circular to all missions in June of 1944 which referred specifically to the liaison question between diplomatic and trade representatives abroad. Greater sharing of despatches from both departments was believed to be in the general interest, as would closer contact between officers in drafting despatches of basic political and economic interest.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, the exigencies of the war and the rapid growth of representation did not allow for close consultations between the departments in the field.

Clouding the issue of representation in typical Canadian fashion were the provincial offices abroad. The case of provincial representation in London merits some special attention. Since 1921, the Agents General, as provincial representatives came to be known, had endeavoured to receive greater recognition from the United Kingdom Government. The British had always refused, maintaining that the proper channel of communication was through the High Commissioner and although successive High Commissioners had tried to assist the Agents General with smaller matters, the federal government had always re-

---

42. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2116, file AR 420/6, "Proposals for Co-ordination of External Services, External Affairs, and Trade and Commerce", Report of the Committee to the Secretary of State for External Affairs and the Minister of Trade and Commerce, 17 November 1943' also Pearson Papers, vol. 8, "Memorandum on the Canadian 'Foreign Service'" by George Glazebrook, n.d. (late 1945). The first in a series of steps toward complete amalgamation was undertaken in January 1982.

43. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2116, file AR 420/6, circular 814, Robertson to Massey, 29 June 1944; also King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 369, Robertson to King, 29 June 1944.

frained from urging Britain to grant them customs privileges and representational recognition. British policy was applied universally to all Agents General, in spite of the fact that the Australian states possessed a better claim to recognition than the Canadian provinces because of their constitutional status. The official 1947 position was "the Commonwealth Relations Office, while anxious to be as courteous and helpful as possible, desire to avoid anything that may appear to give any distinctive recognition to the Agents General in London."<sup>44</sup>

There were a few tempests in the federal/provincial relationship in London. The circulation of a Government of Ontario form entitled "Prospective Citizenship in Ontario" caused a furor not only as a result of its misleading title, but also for the sentence, "When the various governments concerned announce certain post-war plans affecting the movement of people, money and trade, our own Government will release definite plans." Thomas Stone, a diplomat concerned with Canadian representations to the exiled Allied governments in London, commented that "the atmosphere of the rest of the text is of sovereignty and independence which would make the Abbé Groulx and the O'Leary brothers green with envy." He believed the entire affair "to be one of the worst menaces to Canadian unity."<sup>45</sup> The federal and Ontario provincial elections, which occurred in May of 1945, occasioned the opening of an Ontario Government office across from Ontario House on Charles II Street in London. Described as "Canadian Election Headquarters", the windows were festooned with posters supporting the federal Conservative Party: "Vote with the Conservatives and Get Home Quickly."<sup>46</sup>

There were four provincial offices in London by early 1947,<sup>47</sup> prompting Pearson to jokingly write to Robertson that he should consider having meetings of a Dominion-Provincial Council every Saturday morning at Canada House. As High Commissioner, Robertson's easy

---

44. DEA, File 8963-40, "Status and Privileges of Agents General of Canadian Provinces in the United Kingdom", Frederic Hudd to Pearson, 12 August 1947.

45. DEA, File 169(S), "Activities of Ontario Government in the United Kingdom", T.A. Stone to Robertson, 16 October 1944.

46. *Ibid.*, cypher cable, Brooke Claxton to Massey, 17 May 1945; cypher cable, Campbell Moodie (Information Officer, Canada House) to McCracken (Claxton's Office), 11 May 1945.

47. Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and Saskatchewan.



access to Foreign Office officials allowed for positive action on several of the provincial demands. These included the duty-free import of personal effects, liquor and tobacco, and the carrying of a distinguishing "AG" licence plate on the official automobile. As a result of renewed representations of the Agents General, Robertson believed that the only scenario which would resolve all differences would be for the Agents General to be nominally attached to the High Commission, but he seriously doubted the acceptability of such a suggestion. Pearson agreed, stating that "it would be out of the question to promise such artifice."<sup>48</sup> So provincial representation without diplomatic recognition continued, puzzling many, confounding at times the Canadian quest for international status, and confusing Norman Robertson: "They (Agents General) are well-disposed and most cooperative. I am sometimes a little puzzled about the purpose they serve in the absence of either administrative or representative duties."<sup>49</sup>

As in the Department in Ottawa, and so abroad, did the French Canadian fact have to be demonstrated. General Georges Vanier, Jean Désy and Pierre Dupuy have already been mentioned as outstanding diplomats who won the admiration of their peers, and in the case of the latter two, some notoriety within the Department for preferring to work abroad and never in Ottawa. Of concern, however, was the question of whether French Canadian officers should be named as heads of specific missions as a part of policy. In a memorandum to the Prime Minister of January 1944, Norman Robertson emphasized the importance of creating a careful balance between Protestant and Catholic and English and French heads of missions; a balance which in Latin America would be seriously upset if French Canadian ministers were appointed

---

48. DEA File 8963-40, Pearson to St. Laurent, 17 May 1948.

49. DEA File 169(S), Robertson to Pearson, 5 March 1947. John Holmes has written: "The relations among the provinces and of the provinces with foreign bodies increasingly look like diplomacy on other levels. The consequences of this diversity can be the spread of anarchy by the abandonment of rational means of communication or the adaptation of diplomatic rules and practices to serve the purpose of a universe in the process at the same time of integration and disintegration." John W. Holmes, "The Study of Diplomacy: A Sermon", occasional paper delivered at the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University, June 1973 at a conference on "The Changing Role of the Diplomatic Function in the Making of Foreign Policy".

to both Mexico and Peru.<sup>50</sup> Robertson repeated the position;

In principle, I think we should try to get away from the old convention which assumed that our representative in the United Kingdom should always be an English Canadian, our representative in France a French Canadian, and our man in Dublin an Irish Catholic. An extension of this convention, which needs constant watching, is the assumption that diplomatic posts in Latin America will naturally be filled by French Canadian appointees.<sup>51</sup>

One of the dangers of such an attitude was the tendency of the public to believe that appointments were made in such a fashion and consequently many representations were made to the Department by citizens offering their services. For example, many applications for the mission at Kuibyshev, the war-time capital of the Soviet Union, were received from naturalized Canadians of Russian and Ukrainian origin. It was thought best to discourage such applications, even though many of the applicants possessed language and other qualifications of a higher order.

In view of domestic political concerns, however, a measured and considered pace had to be followed in both the appearance and the method of the extension of any appointments policy. In April of 1943, a leading member of the Godbout Government in Quebec had declared it to be the duty of the Quebec Government to promote both cultural and commercial connections with Latin America and that following the war many agencies of the province would be established in South American countries. This view was peculiar to Quebec, and promulgated by *Le Devoir*, which criticized Canada's policy toward Latin America for ignoring the good will which had evolved over the years through cultural and especially religious connections through missionary work. In a despatch from Washington, Pearson suggested that this opinion was enhanced by the belief that Quebec's major handicaps to progress were commercial in nature, and that the opinion held in some responsible quarters was that provincial commercial agencies were in a better position to sponsor local commercial interests than federal offices. The two should complement each other in the field, since French Cana-

---

50. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 241, file 2444, "Canadian Representation to Mexico, 1941-1945", memorandum from Robertson to King, 17 January 1944.

51. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 241, file 2448, "Canadian Representation to Sweden, 1943-48", memorandum from Robertson to King, 29 January 1944.



dian representation in the Trade Commissioner Service had never been considered satisfactory. Pearson recommended the creation of a Cultural Relations Division within External Affairs that would promote good will which would in turn foster commercial opportunities. Robertson opined that Canada, including Quebec, was already well-served in Latin America since French Canadian officers had been deliberately placed into service there. Reports of the recent visit of Latin American journalists to Canada stated that there existed a favourable disposition to Canada because Canadians relied less on high-pressure salesmanship. An effective compromise was attained in the signature of Canada's first ever cultural agreement with Brazil in early 1944.<sup>52</sup>

Rapid expansion of representation abroad entailed numerous practical difficulties, including the staffing of missions, the allocating of resources and a multifarious array of functional problems. Since many of the officers of the Department were considered to be too junior to accept a position as a Head of Mission, several eminent Canadians were appointed from outside the Foreign Service. They included General Victor Odlum, a World War I soldier who represented Canada in Australia, then China and later Turkey; T.C. Davis, a Saskatchewan jurist who followed Odlum to both Australia and China; and Warwick Chipman, a lawyer and former President of the League of Nations Association of Canada who became the first ambassador to Chile. There were others, but in each of the above cases, the mission was established by the Minister or Ambassador and a harried Third Secretary, who was responsible for finding housing, offices, drafting and sending messages in code and decyphering messages as they arrived. Human resources were in great demand, and many missions suffered through prolonged growing pains, which were not abetted by the lack of experience of the head of mission, the spectre of uneven economic conditions which caused administrative difficulties and spiralling war-time inflation.<sup>53</sup>

---

52. DEA, File 5175-401, "Quebec Representation in Foreign Countries - Latin America", despatch 1274 Pearson to Secretary of State for External Affairs (King), 2 June 1943; despatch 704 King to Leighton McCarthy, 25 June 1943; King Papers, vol. 266, file 2652, memorandum from Robertson to King, 22 November 1943; also interview with Benjamin Rogers, 19 November 1980.

53. Certainly the case for the mission in Santiago. Interview with Rt. Hon. Jules Leger, 5 September 1980.

There was an inevitable lack of consistency; missions were sent on their way with a minimum of ground rules and with no umbilical cords; ministers were expected to establish themselves and exist by their wits - then inform Ottawa. En route to Chile in January 1943, Chipman passed through Washington for some basic training. Pearson dutifully recorded the event in his diary: "He is here to find out how a Legation is run. Maybe we had better not tell him too much."<sup>54</sup> Once on the spot, the Head of Mission relied heavily on the good offices of the British and the American representatives in assisting during the first tenuous months and in helping to open doors in official circles. Even *force majeure* had to be reckoned with, as in the case of the embassy in Mexico, where altitude sickness became a problem for all members of staff. A cottage at Cuernavaca - 3000 feet below Mexico City - had to be leased so that embassy officials could spend alternate weekends in comfort.<sup>55</sup>

Officer shortages were a constant hindrance. "The greatest difficulty," Norman Robertson wrote the Canadian Minister in Washington, Leighton McCarthy, in reply to a request for more diplomatic personnel, "is that we have not enough experienced men to go around. Three new legations have recently been established and we have not been able to send to each of them more than one member of our permanent Service."<sup>56</sup> The year was 1943, this being before significant expansion took place. Robertson believed that it would be profitless to compare the relative needs in Ottawa, Washington and other posts abroad. Much had been accomplished by bringing the "temporary special assistants" into the Department, some of whom had begun to serve abroad, yet even they could not be spared to alleviate the chronic shortages at established missions. By late 1947, the shortage of senior men was still so acute that there were suggestions that Hume

---

54. Pearson Diary, 21 January 1943.

55. Mackenzie King however insisted that the expenses for such a cottage should not exceed \$3,000 per annum. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 241, file 2444, "Canadian Representation to Mexico, 1941-1945", memorandum from H.L. Keenleyside to King, 5 July 1945.

56. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 343, Robertson to McCarthy, 8 March 1943.



Wrong should serve concurrently as Ambassador to the United States and as Canadian representative on the United Nations Security Council. Wrong's feelings were that he was too occupied to conduct the ambassadorial job properly, and "...to add to this what should be a second heavy full-time job in another city could only mean in practice that neither duty would be properly discharged, even if the New York delegation were equipped with a competent senior staff." Furthermore, ambassadors in Washington of the United Kingdom, France, China and the Netherlands had attempted this feat and were all "...unanimous in condemning the infliction of this double responsibility on them."<sup>57</sup>

The social aspect of representational activities abroad also required much time and expense. Leighton McCarthy, a Toronto millionaire, generously kept the wine cellar at the embassy in Washington full without billing the Canadian Government. When Pearson, the first career diplomat to attain such high representational office, succeeded him in the latter months of 1944, he could not rely on personal wealth to facilitate both his family's living requirements and the social demands of being an ambassador. His functions as ambassador, Chairman of the Supply Committee of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), and Chairman of the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture, did not make matters easier. Before accepting the position, Pearson sent his opinions to Robertson, stating, "It would, I think, be most unfortunate for our Service if the success of a career appointment to such an important post were prejudiced from the outset by inadequate financial provision for the work to be done."<sup>58</sup>

Residences for Heads of Mission, especially in Washington and London, had to be chosen and furnished as much for their entertainment potential as for their acceptability as a home. Norman Robertson was

---

57. DEA, File 5475-AS-2-40C, "Appointment of Canadian Delegates to the United Nations Security Council", cable WA4039 Wrong to Pearson, 30 December 1947.

58. Pearson received an extra \$75 per month for entertainment purposes as Chairman of the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture. Pearson Papers, vol. 11, file "UN Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture, 1943-44, 1947", Wrong to Pearson, 5 October 1943. His salary as ambassador was \$10,000, with an allowance of \$10,450 and an automobile allowance of \$1,900. Estimated expenditures totalled \$30,000. Pearson Papers, vol. 12, Pearson to Robertson, 12 December 1944.

embarrassed when, as High Commissioner in London, he recommended the purchase of the present official residence on Upper Brook Street, the renovation of which exceeded all estimates by \$90,000.<sup>59</sup> Protocol and entertainment also had to be judiciously observed in Ottawa where foreign representatives would often take offence at the Canadian Government's inability to remember all their state holidays. Mackenzie King's diaries are replete with references to his fluctuating annoyance and delight at the responsibilities of protocol. Astute foreign representatives, however, would find methods which would make their audiences with the Prime Minister most agreeable.<sup>60</sup>

In 1946, Canada sent 102 accredited representatives to international conferences. The coordination of reporting of information became a relatively serious difficulty, in that various missions wished to be informed of behind-the-scenes activities and not receive all their information via the local press.

This problem of keeping missions posted seems to be to increase in complexity. I used to think that if we could set up a division in the Department which would be responsible for pushing out information to Missions marked on a large wall map our headaches would be over. However, the difficulty of course, is that the only people who know what information to send where are the people who are dealing with the subject concerned. There doesn't seem to be any easy solution except constant alertness on the part of fatigued minds.<sup>61</sup>

---

59. Granatstein manuscript, "Civil Servant: Norman Robertson and the Making of Canadian Foreign Policy", Chapter 6; see also Granatstein, *A Man of Influence*, p. 210.

60. Mackenzie King got along exceedingly well with all foreign representatives in Ottawa, although he sometimes showed impatience with the Latin American diplomats. The new Minister of Turkey, Sevki Alhan, won the heart of the Prime Minister by telling him that in Turkey he was regarded with respect and affection for his actions in preventing a war twenty-two years earlier at the time of the Chanak Crisis. King Diary, 21 March 1944.

61. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2105, File "Meeting of the General Assembly, New York, 1946", John Holmes to R.G. Riddell, 28 December 1946. Other government departments represented at international conferences often failed to inform External Affairs of their movements, confusion being the result. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 68, File D-12, Escott Reid to Heeney, 17 September 1948. Coordination of administration and personnel at far-flung posts was assisted by sending the redoubtable Agnes McCloskey on a farewell investigating trip of the Latin American missions before her retirement in 1948. Pearson Papers, Vol. 8, file "Department of External Affairs - Personnel 1946 to 1948", Pearson to H.D. Scully, 23 February 1948.



As a result of these concerns, and as an attempt to standardize reporting, a departmental Committee on Reporting from Missions Abroad held its first meeting on 15 October 1948. Of significance were the questions of the distribution and authorship of despatches, their revision and how they should be distributed abroad. Guidance had, in the past, been given in individual letters of instruction issued to the Heads of Mission at the time of their appointment. It was decided to consolidate memoranda dealing with reporting from abroad in order to produce guidelines which would be more attuned to changing patterns in representation.<sup>62</sup>

\* \* \*

The calibre and capabilities of the officers of the Department guaranteed its ability to survive the trials and tribulations of dynamic growth at home and abroad. They possessed impressive academic qualifications in many disciplines, usually acquired at either Oxford or Cambridge, and to a lesser degree in the United States. "No Empire is strong enough to withstand forever the strain that Cecil Rhodes put on ours", a *Montreal Gazette* editorial intoned. "Our whole course has been warped to pettiness and strutting-self assertion to compensate for wounds suffered in their egos by smart and bumptious youths who couldn't take it at Oxford and are still trying to hand it back from Ottawa."<sup>63</sup> The Rhodes Scholarship connection certainly was and perhaps still is what may be termed an "old-boy network". Its significance lay in the fact that it was a continuing trans-Atlantic matrix of associations and relationships. There is insufficient evidence in both documentary sources and the oral testimony of former officers to assert that Rhodes Scholars entering the Department shared a similar *Weltanschauung* in either their liberal conception of Canada's international role or the ideal state of Canada's relations with the

---

62. DEA, File 9240-40, "Minutes of Committee on Reporting from Missions Abroad - First Meeting", 15 October 1948. Important Heads of Missions often took matters into their own hands in changing reporting patterns. Robertson decided to discontinue the usual fortnightly summary on United Kingdom Affairs in January 1947 and instead have two weekly telegrams dealing with domestic and foreign aspects. King Papers, J1 Series, cable 26, Robertson to Pearson, 8 January 1947.

63. DEA, Papers from the Office of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 715, file 4 "Canadian Foreign Policy, 1932-44", editorial from the *Montreal Gazette*, 17 June 1942.

United Kingdom and the United States. There was, as will be demonstrated in later chapters, a discernible difference between those individuals who had received their higher education in the United States and those who had enjoyed academic life in Britain. Some, like Norman Robertson, had pursued graduate studies in both countries. The officers who had gone to America in the 1930s were influenced by American liberalism, which at that time espoused isolationist tendencies; whereas their colleagues who had studied in the United Kingdom absorbed some of the dialogues between left and right within the British Labour Party. Where the isolationist tinge of the former emphasized Canada's role in the Americas, the latter clung to the more popular view of the "North Atlantic Triangle."

The dominant historical influence on all officers was undoubtedly the experience of the Great War and the failure of the League of Nations to bring stability to the international community. Arnold Toynbee's *A Study of History*, which appeared in 1938, was eagerly read by many in the Department, including Escott Reid, its most prodigious intellectual. The activities of the Canadian institute of International Affairs in the 1930s - a golden decade for the Institute - assisted in formulating the evolving views of the immediate pre-war period and several of its more influential members - Reid, Claxton, Paul Martin, John Baldwin, and John Holmes - would find themselves working in or with the Department in the 1940s. The writings of John Dafoe, F.R. Scott, Frank Underhill and the League for Social Reconstruction were instrumental in shaping the minds of several of the younger officers, particularly the institution-builders. Amid all the social-scientific skills developed at various universities by the aspiring diplomats, one cannot overlook the artistic: the poetry of Douglas LePan and Robert Ford, and the diaries of Charles Ritchie.<sup>64</sup>

The accessibility of senior officers such as Robertson, Wrong and Pearson to the junior staff, whether in regard to policy questions, personal matters - it was customary for the Under-Secretary to

---

64. Douglas LePan won the Governor General's Award for poetry in 1954 and for fiction in 1964; Robert A.D. Ford won the same award for poetry in 1956; and Charles Ritchie won the Governor General's Award for Non-Fiction in 1974 for *The Siren Years*, (Toronto, 1974).



approve marriages - or social occasions helped to evoke an *esprit de corps* which was indeed rare in other services. One has only to recall the baseball games between the "Hapless Heeneys" and "Pearson's Puissants" as an example. This, combined with a collective feeling of guilt among younger officers at not being able to enlist, led to an acceptance of long hours, poor working conditions and a Prime Minister who gave no indication that he knew of their existence.<sup>65</sup>

Inevitably, officers of the Department of External Affairs looked to the British Foreign Service as an example of both how to and how not to do things. Despatches were written in the admired British mode, including the ever-present "I have the honour to be Sir, Your obedient Servant" formal ending. Even those officers who were suspicious of British foreign policy motives conceded that the British could write much better than the Americans. The Ashton-Gwatkin observations on the reorganization of the British Foreign Service of 1944 were widely circulated within the Department and there was renewed discussion of amalgamation, home allowances, and changes in recruitment procedures.<sup>66</sup> The "country house" selection method of the British, where recruits were observed in a controlled environment, was also given some consideration before being discounted as being too geographically impractical.<sup>67</sup> Frequent queries emanating from Canada House regarding questions of protocol, forms of address and the like, were found on the desks of the Foreign Office.<sup>68</sup> The openness of Commonwealth consultation at the time of the Dumbarton Oaks discussions on world organization in the autumn of 1944 gave Canadian officers in Washington an open window on the conduct of negotiations between the Great Powers. The British also shared many of their despatches and memoranda with the Canadians, but this was not a

---

65. Most of the above based on interviews with Escott Reid, 12 June 1980; Gordon Robertson, 4 June 1980; Charles Ritchie, 20 June 1980; and James Gibson, 25 June 1980.

66. DEA, File 2248-40, "Organization and Regulation of British Foreign Service", memorandum from Wrong to Robertson, 12 March 1945.

67. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2116, file AR 420/5, memorandum from Holmes to Robertson, 25 March 1947.

68. Foreign Office, FO 371, W10265/102/68, John Holmes to A.V. Coverley-Price, 16 October 1946.

one-way flow since copies of valuable Canadian despatches - the reports of Dana Wilgress, the Canadian Ambassador in Moscow, for instance - also reached London. The State Department shared as well, but not nearly as much.

Recruitment of officers before and after the war differed from the British method, although both services relied on a written examination. "The standard required for successful competition in normal times is about equivalent to that of a Ph.D. examination" and the ratio of candidates to appointments before the war was approximately 50 to 1.<sup>69</sup> Questions on the examinations for the Canadian Foreign Service encompassed areas of domestic and international politics, economics and the arts, and did not resemble the broad philosophical questions found on the British examinations.<sup>70</sup> Successful candidates would receive a starting salary as Third Secretary of \$2,400 per annum, though women who were also recruited by competitive examination to ease the shortage, received considerably less for performing similar functions.

What characterized the new Canadian career diplomats of the mid-1940s were the twin dichotomies of zeal and anonymity; idealism and pragmatism. In Mackenzie King's opinion, anonymity was the most admirable quality of any government official. Policy was meant to be announced by Cabinet ministers and not by a plethora of civil servants who had no conception of the political weight of their statements. Speeches on the part of officers of the Department had, in the past, been somewhat of a rarity, especially after Walter Riddell had been officially rebuked for advocating oil sanctions at the time of the

---

69. DEA, File 2795-AB-40, "Canada's Foreign Office", proposed article by H.L. Keenleyside, n.d., 1945.

70. DEA, File 2248-40, "Organization and Regulation of British Foreign Service"; DEA, Personnel Files Series, vol. 381, file C340/HC/39. The British Foreign Service examination, which was the same as the Civil Service examination contained numerous general essay questions: "Consider the place of the public house in the social life of Great Britain" and "Describe, with explanations and illustrative examples, the methods of seed dispersal used by plants." Questions on the Canadian examination in 1940 included "The question of Canadian unity" and "a letter to your younger brother suggesting a course of study on international affairs."



Abyssinian Crisis. With Canada's global role expanding so quickly, it was only a matter of time before they were pulled into the public spotlight. The Prime Minister reacted predictably: "These matters are getting out of hand. Thus far External Affairs seems to have been fortunate in the care exercised by its officials abroad. The matter, however, is one which cannot be too closely watched."<sup>71</sup> The Information Division of the Department began printing some of the more important diplomatic speeches for public distribution in early 1947, as part of a programme to publicize the Department. "No Canadian," Pearson declared in the first speech to be printed, "need worry today about the mysteries of Canadian diplomacy hovering over his head."<sup>72</sup> Some senior officials, especially Norman Robertson, were wary of public utterances. "I have not made my living by public speaking," Robertson told his audience at the Canada Club in London in 1946, "I have always felt that the so-called Trappist vows of silence and anonymity, which it is sometimes thought are imposed on the Civil Service from above, are really its principle prerequisites. I have certainly enjoyed a long and sheltered immunity from speech-making and this moment of unmuzzling gives me no feeling of relief."<sup>73</sup> Ironically, it was Robertson who had unsuccessfully tried to insist that all formal speeches should be submitted to the Under-Secretary in advance. Pearson, who had cultivated good relations with the press since his days in Washington, and whose public remarks were often laced with self-deprecating barbs, was more of a performer, but may already have been raising his sights to a political career. Wrong had pressed for a general but flexible directive which should be followed.<sup>74</sup> It was

---

71. King had clearly not forgotten the Riddell incident. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 411, King to Pearson, 21 November 1946.

72. DEA, Statements and Speeches, 47/1, Address by Pearson to the Ottawa Branch of the Alumni Federation of the University of Toronto, 11 January 1947.

73. DEA, File 40-AG-40, "Appointment of Robertson as Canadian High Commissioner to United Kingdom", speech given by Robertson to the Canada Club in London, 20 November 1946. The Prime Minister cabled his congratulations.

74. Pearson Papers, vol. 3, Wrong to Pearson, 12 December 1947.

discretion, however, which became the guide; and to paraphrase John Holmes, transformed the necessity of public diplomacy into a virtue.

Zeal sometimes overshadowed discretion. Individual officers would occasionally exhibit their own preconceptions and biases. A too strident nationalism at times emerged in their public speeches and representations; observances of protocol were not always exact; diplomatic language was known to have suffered from being either too diaphanous or too imprecise. The idealistic ends of a new internationalism designed to change an imperfect world were pursued with vigour and often transcended policy to become personal crusades. Pragmatism appeared to be endemic to the upper echelons of the policy-making hierarchy within the Department. The resultant dialectic was both symptomatic and consistent with the adolescent growth of the Department of External Affairs, and the coming to the fore of a new generation of Canadian diplomat.



## CHAPTER II

### THE FUNCTIONALIST IDEAL

The 'functional principle' was a singularly Canadian philosophy which formed the foundation of Canadian foreign policy during the 1940s. Not a Canadian invention, the principle's most lucid definition comes from a seminal study which asserts that the functional principle may be reduced to two fundamental positions: "first, that the Great Powers are entitled to take the lead in international affairs but not to dominate them; and, secondly, that control should be shared with such other powers as are able and willing to make a definite contribution to the particular object in view."<sup>1</sup>

One should initially note that the functional principle finds its origins in the theory of international relations known as 'functionalism', which postulates that a viable and pacific international system can best be constructed through international institutions concerned with economic and social questions, rather than with the

---

1. Douglas G. Anglin, "Canadian Policy Towards International Institutions, 1939-1950" (unpublished D.Phil. dissertation, Corpus Christi, Oxford, 1956), p. 264.

web of international politics. The functional principle, in its Canadian incarnation, therefore represented a logical extrapolation of the functional theory: leading representation on international councils should be awarded to those states which, through their resources and international experience, found themselves closely associated with such economic and social concerns.<sup>2</sup> The functional principle, or functionalism, was given strong expression in exhorting Canadian participation in the Central Committee of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA); it fueled the campaign against the great power veto in the United Nations; and it would eventually lead to an article in the North Atlantic Treaty which called for the promotion of an Atlantic community in fields other than defence.

Hume Wrong was the inspirational figure in the development of functionalism. He presented the theory to Norman Robertson in January 1942 as one of several policy strategies designed to maintain Canadian influence and status in the wake of American involvement in the war, and by August, the functional principle had been elevated by Wrong - with the consent and encouragement of his colleagues within the Department of External Affairs - to become the preferred policy. His enunciation of this policy came in a lengthy and well-reasoned memorandum directed to the Under-Secretary: "In principle, each of the United Nations should contribute to the direction of the general war effort in proportion to the value of its contribution to that effort. The principle is easy to state", Wrong conceded, "but difficult to apply." The memorandum was a response to feelings that the recent establishment of the Combined Boards - the centralized Allied agencies charged with control of the economic war effort - assumed that the United Nations, as the Allied Powers were known after 1 January 1942, were divided into two groups - one dependent on London, the other on Washington, with the Soviet Union in a special position. "It has been obvious from the first that Canada does not fit into this pattern," Wrong wrote; "...there is, however, evidence of a strong desire in both capitals not to depart from the two-power basis

---

2. See John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1979), p. 72; also James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada: Peacemaking and Deterrence* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 161-2.



of membership on the Boards...In our contact with the organs for the direction of the war, should we be content merely with protecting our interests?"<sup>3</sup> While on a visit to London in November 1942 to discuss Canadian desires for a more intimate policy-making association with the Combined Boards, Wrong detected that the British ministers seemed receptive to Canadian aspirations. As he had stated earlier, functionalism was not difficult to define but its direction and applications were another matter: "If we wish to push these matters further, I am sure that it will be necessary for us to make up our minds firmly what we want to do and where we want to go."<sup>4</sup>

The functional principle had been utilized on a single-issue basis in *ad hoc* fashion during the latter part of 1942 in dealing with the UNRRA membership question, Canadian liaison with the Combined Chiefs of Staff through the Canadian Joint Staff in Washington, membership of the Combined Production and Resource Board, the Pacific Council, and in a number of less than satisfactory contacts with the Combined Food Board which had fallen short of Canadian expectations. In March 1943, Wrong stated that "we have approached the questions simply and have improvised as successful methods as we could manage...", but international post-war planning more generally had to allow for a cohesive form and this would be "the principle that representation on international bodies should be determined on a functional basis so as to permit the participation of those countries which have the greatest stake in the particular subject under examination."<sup>5</sup>

Wrong had been influenced - as had others in his Department - by studies on international relations which had emanated from the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London and by papers from the Foreign Office Research Department (FORD). These papers were virtually all academic in nature and included efforts by Arnold Toynbee,

---

3. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 20, memorandum, "Canada, the United Nations and the Combined Boards", 8 August 1942; see also A.J. Miller, "The Functional Principle in Canada's External Relations", *International Journal* XXXV, No. 2, (Spring 1980), p. 314.

4. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 23 "London 1942", memorandum, "Combined Boards", 5 November 1942.

5. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 338, file 3668 "United Nations 1942-1950", memorandum, Wrong to Robertson, 19 March 1943.

T. North Whitehead, Nicholas Mansergh and David Mitrany. It was the latter's consolidation of some of his theories developed between the wars which attracted the attention of Canadian internationalist thinkers. Mitrany's *The Progress of International Government* had been published in 1933 and had influenced Wrong, but there was considerable excitement at the June 1943 publication of Mitrany's "A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization",<sup>6</sup> when the harmonization of the evolving functional principle to general foreign policy was nearing its apogee within the Department. Wrong acknowledged the debt to Mitrany's functionalist theory in the development of its Canadian offshoot: "There is another meaning given to the term, used especially by Professor Mitrany in a study recently issued by Chatham House... the two meanings overlap and are not essentially inconsistent but the variation in the use of the term should be borne in mind."<sup>7</sup>

It was left to Norman Robertson to discover how functionalism could capture the imagination of Mackenzie King. This was less difficult than imagined and the UNRRA controversy during the first half of 1943 would offer him the opportunity. In a memorandum to the Prime Minister, Robertson stated that the Canadian experience between the wars had demonstrated the practical difficulties of applying the legal concept of the equality of states, both to the great powers and small nations, to membership in international bodies and that it was now abundantly clear that no international system could be based upon great power hegemony to the exclusion of others. Moreover, what ground should the middle powers occupy? "It is not always the largest powers that have the greatest contribution to make to the work of these bodies

---

6. David Mitrany's earlier work, *The Progress of International Government* (London: 1933) was most influential but the functional theory was expressed with more passion in "A Working Peace System." Mitrany was not the first either, since Leonard Woolf had noted the functional principle in his *International Government* (1916) in connection with the success of the International Postal Union. See Miller, "The Functional Principle in Canada's External Relations", p. 316 and Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, p. 72.

7. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 44, file W-22-1, UNRRA 1942-1943", "Notes on Some Questions which may arise during the Meeting of the Relief Council at Atlantic City", 3 November 1943.



or the greatest stake in their success...representation on such bodies can often be determined on a functional basis and in our view this principle should be applied whenever it is feasible."<sup>8</sup>

Mackenzie King made Canadian functionalism public in his speech to the House of Commons on 9 July 1943, during the customarily late debate on the estimates of the Department of External Affairs.<sup>9</sup> It was the first volley in a barrage of public statements on functionalism which would continue with varying degrees of intensity until the founding of the United Nations in the summer of 1945. The purpose of this initial speech was two-fold: to discover if Canadian public opinion would find the functional principle palatable and to let other nations take notice of this Canadian declaration for world organization. The majority of the Canadian press - who were in this instance particularly well-briefed - expressed the view that the Prime Minister's remarks heralded a new age in Canadian foreign policy and made Canada a spokesman for the smaller countries whose role in the world was greater than mere numerical size would indicate. Truly, the man who had so long stood for freedom for Canada from foreign commitments had apparently and dramatically turned over a new leaf. But Mackenzie King and his government were already committed to a global war, which, everyone was certain, would spawn new attempts at international organization. If Canada aspired to being more than merely at best a second player in such a renewal, then Canada had to display some self-interested approaches of its own. Indeed, Canada was already doing so in its determined efforts to secure greater recognition of its role in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, as will be discussed below. Nonetheless, the timing of the Prime Minister's speech was unfortunate, since it coincided with the Allied invasion of Sicily that same evening and both American and British newspapers, although mentioning that Mackenzie King had indicated the need for the establishment of a major international organization before the end of

---

8. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3694, memorandum, Robertson to King, 18 January 1943. This memorandum was formulated into a cable which was sent to Massey in London on 22 January and dealt directly with the UNRRA representation question. DEA General Registry File 2295-G-40. See below.

9. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 9 July 1943, p. 4558.

the war, did not specifically mention the functional principle, concentrating on reports from the battlefield instead. The inattentiveness of the press of the great powers was not helped by the failure to send advance copies of the speech to the foreign offices of the Wartime Information Board.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, the Swedish Consul General cabled a full account of the speech to his Foreign Ministry; the Polish Minister stated that he was most impressed with this concept and was contacting his government in London; Dr. E.R. van Kleffens, the Dutch Foreign Minister, indicated his support from London; and the Yugoslavian Minister in Ottawa telephoned Robertson to register his approval.<sup>11</sup> It was not coincidental that these were all smaller powers who would receive the greatest benefit from the application of the functional principle, and the Department appreciated their interest and support. Canada, however, already considered itself to be a secondary or 'middle power' - perhaps being the only state who could qualify since other contenders had been overrun by the enemy - and a polite form of snobbery prevailed.

\* \* \*

Canadian membership in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) was destined to become the first application of the Canadian functional principle. An unprecedented and concerted effort was made to secure membership on the Central Committee of UNRRA, yet this objective was thwarted, and thus ended the more idealistic phase of functionalism.

UNRRA was formally established in Washington on 9 November 1943, where the agreement was signed by representatives of 44 countries. It represented an initial, if provisional, attempt at international organization and its mandate was "to plan, co-ordinate, administer or arrange for the administration of measures for the relief of victims of war in any area under the control of any of the United Nations."<sup>12</sup> UNRRA was supposed to take over after Military Relief

---

10. DEA, File 5475-40C, memorandum, "Press Comment on Canada's Role in International Organization as Raised in the Debate on External Affairs", 20 July 1943; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, "Privy Council Office: Cabinet War Committee Memoranda", Wartime Information Board Survey No. 15, 17 July 1943.

11. DEA, File 5475-40, Saul Rae to Wrong, 22 July 1943.

12. Canada, *Treaty Series*, 1943, No. 16, "Agreement for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration", 9 November 1943, Article I, Section 2(a).



and since there appeared to be no clear delineation between relief and reconstruction before the negotiation of the agreement - at least in terms of planning for a post-war international economic order - the functions of UNRRA were carefully expressed, as the unwieldy name of the organization demonstrated. As John Holmes had written, Canada was indeed fortunate that the first practical application of functionalism would be in a field where Canada could make a strong claim because of its expected role as a large provider.<sup>13</sup>

Following the entry of the United States and the Soviet Union into the war, Allied plans for the relief of Europe slowly reached the formulation stage, but did not attain any form of fruition until the American proposals for a relief organization apart from Military Relief were presented to the British in May 1942. The Americans proposed a 'Relief Council' which would consist of ranking members of the United Nations, and act solely as a channel of communication between the many members. An Executive Committee, consisting of the United Kingdom, China, the Soviet Union and the United States would control all of the yet undefined policy-making powers.<sup>14</sup> This information was received from London through Canada House, and in response the Canadian High Commission was informed that the "...preliminary draft of the proposed organization does not provide for Canadian representation on Executive Committee (sic) which is to be set up. In view of Canada's probable post-war position as a major supplier of needed foodstuffs, it will probably be found necessary to raise the question of the form of Canadian participation before proposed organization takes definite shape."<sup>15</sup>

---

13. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, p. 35; see also Grace Fox, "The Origins of UNRRA", *Political Science Quarterly* LXV, Part 4 (1950), pp. 561-84. For an accurate assessment of Canadian relations with the Combined Boards, see S.D. Pierce and A.F.W. Plumptre, "Canada's Relations with Wartime Agencies in Washington", *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, XI (August 1945), pp. 402-19.

14. DEA, File 2295-G-40, cable no. 1388, Massey to King, 23 May 1942. The American plan had been the outcome of talks between Dean Acheson of the State Department, Harry White of the Treasury and, for the British, Lord Keynes of the Treasury and Richard Law, Minister of State in the Foreign Office.

15. *Ibid.*, cable no. 1105, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Canadian High Commissioner, 6 June 1942.

Seemingly, both the members of the Cabinet and of the Department of External Affairs, infected by a pent-up nationalism which was judged to be sweeping the country as the fortunes of the war turned, inexorably moved toward the functional principle as a possible vehicle for Canadian aspirations for just international recognition. Representation in UNRRA at this stage was closely connected in the minds of Canadian officials with membership of the Combined Food Board. A British compromise of August 1942 which guaranteed Canada a seat on the Board when Canadian questions were discussed and membership of all subsidiary committees, was summarily rejected by the Canadian Cabinet War Committee. The telegraphic traffic between the East Block and Whitehall which followed this decision tended to concentrate more on the question of membership of the relief organization and in a War Committee meeting of 2 December 1942 it was noted with approval that the United Kingdom had given its support to Canadian representation on an expanded Executive Committee of seven.

Canadian representations had apparently been successful, and the United Kingdom made good its promise by arguing with the other great powers that the efficiency of the Central or Policy Committee would be impaired by excluding from membership those countries whose cooperation was essential. "In particular," the aide-memoire to the Americans and Russians stated, "the United Kingdom Government consider that Canada, as one of the major potential suppliers of relief goods, has a very strong claim to membership of the Committee, a claim that, on merits, is regarded as carrying greater weight than that of any other country apart from the four Great Powers."<sup>16</sup> New Zealand and South Africa were in favour of such Canadian participation and it was understood to be acceptable to the Soviet Union as well. The Canadians confused this pragmatic response to their entreaties as signalling imminent great power recognition of their functional principle. Such was not to be the case.

This illusory situation did not last, however, and was certainly based upon misconceptions in the first place. The Soviet Union had no intention of allowing the Policy Committee to expand from four

---

16. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3694, United Kingdom Aide-Memoire, 17 November 1942; also vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 2 December 1942.



to seven for the official reason that such an increase would complicate both the functions and the decisions of the Committee.<sup>17</sup> In reality, Soviet fears of Anglo-Saxon domination of the Committee and the spectre of Polish representation which was decidedly not pro-Soviet accounted for the chief Soviet concerns. Soviet resistance appeared to be hardening American resolve as well, since the cornerstone of Roosevelt's approach to relief was based upon accommodating the Russians. A recurring Soviet argument against Canadian functionalism was that acceptance would set a precedent for future international organizations - precisely the reason behind Canadian advocacy of the principle.

A memorandum by Norman Robertson on functionalism as related to UNRRA of 18 January 1943 formed the basis for the discussion of the issue in the Cabinet War Committee three days later. The wide-ranging deliberations were concluded by the Prime Minister who expressed the consensual view that on broader aspects of international organization, the United Nations could not be divided into a group of great powers who would exercise political and military responsibilities and another which was excluded from such responsibilities regardless of size and importance. The Government and the Prime Minister had become committed to a philosophy which echoed Mitrany's aphorism of "Peace will not be secured if we organize the world by what divides it."<sup>18</sup>

The British were quite taken by the Canadian passion for functionalism, for it would be beneficial for them to have both Canada and another European ally on the Policy Committee. There was an inherent fear that the European allies would reject the entire scheme for UNRRA otherwise. British diplomats confessed that they had missed the point of earlier Canadian entreaties for the acceptance of the functional principle. But functionalism was seen by them in a different hue; it was something which in addition to securing just and proper recognition for Canada, could also give Britain everything it wanted,

---

17. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2110, file AR 405/8 Pt. 1, memorandum from M. Maisky, Soviet Ambassador to the United Kingdom, to the Foreign Office, 16 December 1942.

18. David Mitrany, "A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization", (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1943), p. 54; King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 21 January 1943.

since it was evident that during the immediate post-war period the major political and strategic decisions would be in the hands of the great powers. The functional principle, as applied in cases such as UNRRA, would give a "clue to the labyrinth" of post-war international organization: "It gives us a principle by which we can reconcile the political leadership of the Great Powers with the rights of small nations." Gladwyn Jebb, the major architect of the forthcoming British proposals for a general world organization, perceived functionalism as a sort of vehicle or "window dressing" which would attract smaller states to the concept of great power leadership.<sup>19</sup> It should be emphasized that this was largely a Foreign Office view and that the Dominions Office was more sympathetic to the Canadian interpretation;<sup>20</sup> the institutional aspects of world organization, however, came under the purview of the Foreign Office.

The United States did not appreciate the Canadian arguments for membership of the Policy Committee at all. If Canada came into the Committee, then the Pan-American price would have to be paid, which meant including Brazil. The American position was reinforced by a Congress still very suspicious of international commitments and an Administration which - if the Hot Springs Food Conference of May 1943 was indicative - was testing the waters of international organization in rather haphazard fashion. The American position, as expressed by Secretary of State Cordell Hull, was that a Four Power Committee was favoured since it would be difficult to choose one European ally after Canada and Brazil had been added to the Committee.

At a Four Power meeting on 23 January 1943, where Lord Halifax, the British ambassador to the United States, put the Canadian case for membership to Hull and senior officials from the State Department, Dean Acheson, the Assistant Secretary of State for Economic Affairs, proposed that the difficulty of Canadian membership could be solved by Canada and the United Kingdom sharing a seat on the Policy Committee or by establishing another committee of supplying countries. Pearson commented in his diary that it was quite impossible to have a single

---

19. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U 2329/402/70, minutes by Gladwyn Jebb on telegram no. 354 from British High Commission in Ottawa, 11 February 1943; also U 2626/402/70, Jebb to Keynes, 28 June 1943.

20. Interview with Lord Garner, 8 November 1979.



British Empire vote and that Acheson on his part demonstrated a surprising lack of knowledge of the Canadian position. Pearson approached Acheson three days later to again press the Canadian case; "Acheson thought the way out might be by abolishing the Policy Committee altogether! This is just one of the headaches that are accumulating in the efforts to translate the United Nations principle into United Nations practice."<sup>21</sup> London also condemned the efficacy of such a proposal and magnanimously offered to stand down in favour of Canada. This, it was felt in Ottawa, was merely a variation upon a common theme and as such tantamount to an Empire seat. Besides, Britain possessed a legitimate right to a seat on the Committee for functional reasons.

The Americans offered their verbal sympathies to the Canadians, but gave the Russians concrete assurances of agreement. The Canadian strategy was to work through the British by repeating arguments to them supporting functionalism and its relation to UNRRA. It was stressed that it would be much more difficult to convince the Canadian public of the wisdom of assuming new responsibilities and making new contributions following the war if Canada was not given its proper share in the decisions involving international organizations.<sup>22</sup> The crusade was spearheaded by Robertson and Wrong in Ottawa, by Massey and Charles Ritchie in London, and by Pearson in Washington.

These representations were perhaps over-stated, and, as expressed by the British to the Americans, Russians and Chinese at the Four Power meetings, counter-productive, since they served only to harden the resolve of the Americans and the Soviets. Acheson launched the second point of his compromise proposal, that is, that there should be a committee for supplying countries and that Canada would be its chairman, sitting in on the meetings of the Policy Committee when

---

21. Pearson Diary, 23-29 January 1943. Acheson commented in retrospect: "Ottawa raised the matter to the plane of high principle upon which the Department of External Affairs prefers (sic) to rest Canada's more mundane interests... Canadian membership on the executive committee of UNRRA seemed a small price to pay for all this and heaven too." Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*, (London, 1969), p. 70.

22. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2100, file AR 405/8 Pt. 1, memorandum from Charles Ritchie to Massey, 26 January 1943; also Pearson Diary, 16-27 February 1943.

supply questions were being discussed. Pearson had been informed in advance by the British that the compromise would be on the agenda of the Four Power meeting of 27 February, so he had an opportunity to telephone Ottawa so that the matter could quickly be brought before the War Committee. The British and the Americans had greatly underestimated the functionalist passions within governing circles in Ottawa and Pearson at his diplomatic best had great difficulty in explaining the War Committee's outright rejection of the compromise to a distressed Acheson on 4 March.<sup>23</sup> The Cabinet was solidly united behind Mackenzie King, as were senior officials, especially Clifford Clark, the Deputy Minister of Finance, who in a letter to Robertson called for Canada's withdrawal from such an organization which would relegate Canada to the back row: "We are still trying to run a democracy and there is some historical evidence to support the thesis that democracies cannot be taxed without representation...Any Canadian Government that accepts such a compromise would soon be brought to realities by the public - and would deserve what they would get."<sup>24</sup> Clearly, some held an exaggerated opinion of the intensity of Canadian public opinion. Pearson thought a visit by Acheson to Ottawa might have gone a long way in convincing the Americans that Canada was indeed serious enough to stake its credibility on the acceptance of the functional principle, but within a few weeks Australian contentions that Australia too deserved representation on the Policy Committee clouded the prospect of such a visit.

With the increasingly polarized positions, the British began to show discomfort. Anthony Eden and Malcolm MacDonald attended a War Committee meeting in Ottawa on 31 March and endeavoured to convince the Ministers of the acceptability of the American compromise. The compromise, Eden ventured, would come very close to meeting Canadian demands and it was absolutely essential that efforts to form this first international organization should be successful. It would be wrong to see this as any sort of precedent, Eden argued, and if the Canadian Government accepted the compromise, a reservation could be

---

23. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2110, file AR 405/8 Pt.1, Cable WA-1017, Pearson to Robertson, 4 March 1943; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 3 March 1943.

24. DEA, File 2295-G-40, Clark to Robertson, 3 March 1943.



made. Eden agreed with the arguments of Mackenzie King and St. Laurent for the recognition of the rights of smaller powers but stated emphatically that the great powers should play the major role.<sup>25</sup>

Pearson was the first Canadian official to become convinced of the need to accept the compromise. Frustrated by the anachronistic preference of his superior in Washington, Leighton McCarthy, for an Empire seat on the Committee, and gloomy over telegrams from Ottawa which implied that he was not pressing the functionalist cause ardently enough, Pearson had the opportunity to observe Acheson's smooth professional diplomacy in turning aside the attempts of Litvinov, the Soviet ambassador, to minimize the British role in the relief of Europe. There was more at stake in UNRRA than Canadian functionalism, and once the difficulties with the Soviets were temporarily resolved, only the 'Canadian difficulty' - as it was known - remained. Pearson believed that Canada had no choice but to accept the compromise and there was no reason whatsoever why Canada should not. The Soviets were apparently so sure that the Supply Committee was to become the vital body of UNRRA that they had already demanded membership. "With the right handling," Pearson opined, "we could make a big thing out of this chairmanship and play a big part in the Organization."<sup>26</sup>

Pearson went to Ottawa at the time of Eden's visit, and the inevitable opportunity arose where he had lunch with Robertson, Wrong and Clark but there was a failure to reach a consensus. While waiting with the Prime Minister and others for Eden's aircraft to land, Pearson showed no hesitation in telling King why he thought the compromise should be accepted. The Prime Minister seemed impressed and confided to Pearson that he had not before understood what the compromise actually entailed. King of course confided other things to Robertson.

Although Robertson and Wrong had been against accepting the compromise, they had not been idle and in a memorandum of 1 April, which bore the stamp of Pearson's influence, they outlined the advantages and disadvantages of accepting or rejecting the compromise in a fashion which was weighted towards acceptance. Against accepting the compromise they stated that it did not represent full recognition of

---

25. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 31 March 1943.

26. Pearson Diary, 22-27 March 1943.

the functional principle, and if this principle was to be enshrined in the post-war organization, Canada should insist upon its acceptance. Qualified participation or 'coming in by the side door' via the Supply Committee would not give the Canadian people sufficient assurances and membership of the Central Committee was therefore essential. Furthermore, a Central Committee composed of the Big Four would confirm the unfortunate impression that every United Nations body formed would be dominated by these same powers even though other nations may prove more important to the solution of a given problem than some of the great powers. On the other hand, chairmanship of the Supply Committee and hence partial membership of the Central Committee surely represented adequate recognition of Canada's position of being at least the fifth ranking country in the world in terms of relief. Public opinion could accept this. If this was indeed the case, then a precedent had been set and the functional principle was validly recognized. And finally, if the compromise was refused, it would be alleged that Canadian obstinacy was responsible for the failure of the entire programme and Canadian reasons for refusing to participate would seem considerably less impressive to others.<sup>27</sup> Canada would have made its functionalist point but would suffer as a result from a sullied international image. This would not be good publicity for a status-conscious nation.

The compromise was accepted by the War Committee on 7 April, but not before J.L. Ilsley, the Minister of Finance, and C.G. Power, the Minister of Defence for Air, indicated that they were still against acceptance. Within the Department of External Affairs, John Read, the respected Legal Adviser, starkly perceived the decision as an abandonment of Canada's "monetary honeymoon" with functionalism and in London, Vincent Massey registered his dismay, fearing that the decision would set an unfortunate precedent: "The key of (sic) the problem is of course representation on a 'functional basis' and I feel that we should stress this in and out of season. It is a time for toughness."<sup>28</sup>

---

27. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3694, memorandum, "The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Organization", 1 April 1943.

28. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 7 April 1943. C.D. Howe and J.L. Ralston were two strong Cabinet members who favoured the acceptance of the compromise. Escott Reid Papers, vol. 6, J.E. Read, "Position of Canada in Relation to Post-War International Organization", 8 November 1943; and King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 346, Massey to Robertson, 10 April 1943.



Toughness notwithstanding, the pragmatists were happy. Pearson, brimming with optimism, repeatedly noted that Canada had won a very important concession which it should not cast away: "I hope we play our cards right now and put a good man on the Supplies Committee."<sup>29</sup> He had no idea it was to be him. A further victory was attained by the end of June when it became apparent that Canada was to be invited to become the third partner on the Combined Food Board. It should be noted however that the actual UNRRA Agreement did not include the much-desired guarantee which would assure that the form of the organization would not be seen to set a precedent for other international organizations. Canadian suggestions for changes in the phraseology of the draft agreement, especially the preference for the Chairman of the Supplies Committee being "a member of" as opposed to "being invited to" the Central Committee were summarily ignored and rejected.<sup>30</sup>

The first session of the Council of UNRRA was held at Atlantic City in November 1943. Pearson and Brooke Claxton were named to lead the Canadian delegation and Wrong had prepared an epistle for functionalism which would see them on their way. It was far from certain, Wrong stressed, that the compromise formula would provide Canada with an adequate voice in the direction of the body and the Canadian delegation should see that "influence should be proportionate to contribution, actual or expected."<sup>31</sup> It appeared that this would be realized and in their report on the conference prepared for the Cabinet War Committee, Pearson and Claxton recognized that there would be no doubt that the Supplies Committee would have a large part to play in UNRRA. Herbert Lehman, the Director General of UNRRA, had already indicated that he was anxious to obtain advice from the Committee as soon as possible since he had already received specific requests regarding arrangements for the future provision of relief goods.<sup>32</sup> Also, the

---

29. Pearson Diary, 8 April 1943.

30. DEA, File 2295-G-40, "Memorandum on Draft Convention for United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration", 5 July 1943.

31. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 24, "Notes on some questions of international organization which may arise during the meeting of the Relief Council at Atlantic City", 3 November 1943.

32. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Privy Council Office Memoranda, Cabinet War Committee Document no. 668, "First Session of the Council of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, Atlantic City, November 10th- December 1st, 1943".

Supplies Committee appeared to be functionalist in its membership, since in addition to the great powers and Canada, places had been allotted to Australia, Belgium, Brazil, India, the Netherlands and New Zealand. The meeting at Atlantic City had stipulated that the Council of UNRRA would meet every six months. Of greatest significance, however, was the agreement that the member states who had not been invaded would contribute one per cent of their national income, 10% of which was to be made available in convertible funds, for use by UNRRA for purchases outside the donor countries. Canada's total contribution would amount to \$77 million, which would place it third behind the United States and the United Kingdom.<sup>33</sup>

Pearson was eventually appointed Chairman of the Supplies Committee and his ability and verve helped to make the Committee efficient, in spite of the fact that he was invited to fewer than half of the meetings of the Central Committee. His position, coupled with a warm and easy rapport with the press, resulted in a very high profile, and although it was very unusual it seemed only natural that Pearson, a civil servant and not yet an ambassador, should serve as the President of the second meeting of the Council which was held in Montreal in September 1944.<sup>34</sup> His association with UNRRA was the first significant step in his meteoric career in public affairs.

The Canadian role in UNRRA was utilized by the Government to convince the Canadian public of the merits of functionalism and of the important part which Canada was playing in the organization. UNRRA, partly because of the organization's effective press section and the attention of the Wartime Information Board, was constantly in the news, and was depicted - to use Pearson's phrase - as an example of 'cooperative nationalism', the prelude to a new world order. Canadian policy-makers took advantage of this publicity and the favourable response to it across the nation, this being exemplified by Mackenzie King's opening address to the meeting of the Council in Montreal and

---

33. DEA, File 2295-AZ-40, "Report to Parliament on the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration", October 1945.

34. The British were lavish in their praise of Pearson. CAB 66, WP(44)589, "Second Session of the Council of UNRRA", memorandum by the Minister of State (Richard Law), 19 October 1944.



Claxton's subsequent speech, "UNRRA and Public Opinion".<sup>35</sup>

It is not the intention here to dwell upon UNRRA's obvious successes and the difficulties encountered in relieving a war-ravaged world, which have been well-documented in other sources.<sup>36</sup> What is of greater interest is that as UNRRA activities progressed, great power concern with functionalism declined proportionately. Soviet attacks on all aspects of the organization, especially the administration, became incessant, and while the war lasted, the Americans and the British had preferred the authority of the established Combined Boards in related areas rather than the larger and more cumbersome Supplies Committee. Further, the American Congress, piqued by the fact that the disbursement of American contributions were subject to multilateral control, imposed the qualification on the United States' second contribution that the Central Committee as opposed to the Council should allocate such funds. The British still succumbed to the "window dressing" theory and believed that UNRRA would have little to do near the end of the war since it would be caught between the relief functions of the military and the activities of nascent local governments. To counter these views, Pearson emphasized that there was a great deal of popular interest in UNRRA in North America and claimed that "while the Canadian Government would certainly give to UNRRA all the relief supplies which she had promised, - especially as she had some responsibility for and control over UNRRA - there would be no disposition whatever to hand out free military relief

---

35. Claxton Papers, vol. 68, file 1 "UNRRA", speech, "UNRRA and Public Opinion", n.d. (October 1944). The speech contained a remark which could be seen as prophetic in light of Canadian policy in the next few years: "In the difficult times that lie ahead the support for international cooperation will not be sufficient unless it is based on the widespread understanding and knowledge consequent upon the recognition of enlightened self-interest."; also Pearson Papers, vol. 7, proposed article for the *New York Times*, "UNRRA: Doorway to Cooperative Nationalism", October 1945.

36. The official history is George Woodbridge *et al*, *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration* 3 vols. (New York, 1950), for Canadian perspectives see F.H. Soward, *Canada In World Affairs: From Normandy to Paris, 1944-1946*, (Toronto, 1950), pp. 82-98.

supplies to be dispensed by the United States and United Kingdom armies."<sup>37</sup> Perhaps the great powers, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, had recognized the functional principle as something to avoid in the future. With the accession of France to great power status following the formation of the United Nations Organization, Canada was elevated to the Central Committee of UNRRA, but at that point UNRRA itself was already beginning to wind down. Moreover, and certainly inevitably, the great powers had long since turned their gaze to the much larger questions of a global political organization, and it was imperative that the functionalists of the Department of External Affairs quickly adapt to consider these issues. It was a time for flexibility.

\* \* \*

As it became evident to Canadian policy-makers that in spite of their persistent efforts, the functional principle would not be enshrined in the UNRRA Agreement, Canadian functionalists began to turn inwards. UNRRA had served as the initial testing ground, but during the UNRRA issue, developments behind the scenes were far from static. The last half of 1943 was indicative of how quickly events were moving: the capitulation of Italy was imminent by mid-year; the British were busily at work preparing their proposals for a world organization and invited Canadian comments; the eventual defeat of Germany appeared more certain and would necessitate the international control of Europe; and for the first time, Canada had to seriously ponder the prospect of bilateral peacetime defence cooperation with the United States. All these issues on the international agenda were a tall order for a miniscule foreign service to analyze in any amount of detail and it was for this reason that policy planning committees were established in 1943.

Like the commitment to functionalism, the creation of the Post-Hostilities Problems Committee was not a deliberate act, but one of adaptive response to changing situations. Escott Reid had called for the establishment of a planning body within the Department in early 1942: "We must become a planning, thinking and creative body and not

---

37. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 44, file W-22-1, Pearson to Robertson, 27 January 1944; also Pearson Papers, vol. 21, file "FAO 1943-1945", Pearson to Robertson, 13 January 1945.



be content merely to solve day-to-day problems as they arise."<sup>38</sup> His proposal had fallen on deaf ears, since it was for Norman Robertson and Mackenzie King to decide when the time was right. Pragmatism and not planning had been the ethos of the Department: pragmatism was at the core of Mackenzie King's approach to politics; pragmatic was undoubtedly the best adjective to describe Robertson's preference in both policy-formulation and the administration of his Department. The case for membership in the Central Committee of UNRRA had been nationalistic, idealistic, *ad hoc*, and in the end pragmatic. It was not a product of long-range planning. With increasing public and press awareness, as evinced in the Wartime Information Board surveys and various memoranda within the Department of External Affairs on press reactions,<sup>39</sup> it was felt by virtually all the senior officials that at least a modicum of planning was required so that Canadian interests would not be swept away in the tide of international events.

The requisite catalyst came in June 1943 in the form of a cable from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in London which stated that the United Kingdom was soon going to engage in discussions with the United States and the Soviet Union dealing with the termination of hostilities. Canada was asked for comments on the included British proposals and whether Canada would consider participation in the proposed United Nations Commission for Europe and in an international European pricing system.<sup>40</sup> Here was something which called for a coordinated response, and it was clear, in a preliminary memorandum prepared by John Holmes and George Glazebrook, that the entire issue demanded political, military and economic considerations. Hume Wrong be-

---

38. DEA, File 1415-40, Escott Reid, "The United States and Canada: Domination, Cooperation, Absorption", 12 January 1942.

39. DEA, File 5475-40, "Opinion in the Press and in Parliament Concerning the Organization of the United Nations and the Role of Canada in Such Organization", 3 March 1943.

40. DEA, File 7-AB(S), Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, circulars D364, D365, 19 June 1943. The definitive and excellent article on the Post-Hostilities Problems Committees is Don Munton and Don Page, "Planning in the East Block; The Post-Hostilities Problems Committees in Canada, 1943-45", *International Journal* XXXII, no. 4 (Autumn 1977), pp. 687-726.

lieved it to be essential to have the relevant departments involved in such major policy decisions, and, after non-committal War Committee discussions on the topic during July, Robertson called an *ad hoc* inter-departmental group into being. The group recommended that Canada should seek a participatory role in post-hostilities arrangements and the assent of the War Committee thereby set a precedent which would ensure Canadian involvement in Europe after the war.<sup>41</sup> The *ad hoc* group established a more junior Working Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems which was to analyze closely British documents and initiate studies of its own. On 3 November 1943 the Working Committee submitted a report with a strong recommendation:

The experience of the last war indicates that uncertainty and difficulties will arise if the main lines of policy are not decided in advance. The Working Committee, therefore, strongly recommends that early consideration should be given to the nature and extent of the Canadian contribution to the tranquilization of Europe. Preparation now will enable Canada to plan a balanced contribution which will be advantageous not only to the people of Europe but also to the people of Canada. Such preparation will also strengthen considerably Canada's voice in international councils at a time when Canadian interests are at stake.<sup>42</sup>

The Cabinet War Committee formalized the existence of the Working Committee and created an Advisory Committee to oversee its activities. Appropriately, Hume Wrong became the chairman of the Working Committee which included representatives from the Privy Council Office, the three Service Departments, and the Department of External Affairs. The Advisory Committee was firmly in Robertson's hands. The meetings and activities of these committees continued until July 1945, and their influence cannot be under-estimated.

The Working Committee considered a multifarious array of subjects, most of them related to Canada's post-war role in Europe and questions of defence. Its chairman was well aware of the limitations placed upon Canada through the application of its own functional prin-

---

41. DEA, File 7-AB(S), Wrong to Robertson, 5 July 1943, with memorandum by Holmes, "Proposals Concerning Post-Hostility Period"; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Cabinet War Committee Minutes, 15 July 1943.

42. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "Post Hostilities Problems", "Report on Post-Hostilities Problems by the Working Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems", 3 November 1943.



ciple: "On those subjects it would be wasted effort for Canada to attempt to plan from the foundation upwards, since as a secondary country we have not great enough influence to make our views prevail." Wrong acknowledged that there was much for this committee to do, considering the quantity of Foreign Office print the Department was receiving from the British Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee, the number of individual subjects being studied, and the need for the rapid development of Canadian policy positions. "We should, however," Wrong concluded, "be in a position at least to decide what is not acceptable and to advocate changes or additions to fit our particular interests."<sup>43</sup> Canada's interests were again viewed in a functionalist light, and revolved around the concept of a just voice for the secondary or middle powers in an equitable international system. "I think it may be put this way", Wrong wrote to Charles Ritchie in London, "The great powers must co-operate to create and work a world security organization, but unless they can carry with them at least most of the more important secondary states their efforts sooner or later will fail."<sup>44</sup> Ritchie for his part attended the meetings of the British Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee chaired by Gladwyn Jebb of the Foreign Office and was therefore able to observe and report to Ottawa on the preliminary stages of British planning. He also reported to Massey, his superior at Canada House, who took great pains to emphasize Canada's position as a middle power to Whitehall, frequently stating that Canada ranked next in importance to the three great powers in its contribution to the relief and liberation of Europe. "It is for these reasons", Massey wrote Lord Cranborne, Attlee's successor as Dominions Secretary, "because of her function in a practical sense...that it is hoped that full consideration will be given to Canada's position in the various plans for post-war international machinery which are now being evolved."<sup>45</sup>

The British and the Canadians were familiar with each others' planning positions through the linkage between their respective Post-

---

43. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, memorandum by Wrong, "Canadian Planning for the International Settlement", 23 February 1944.

44. DEA, File 7-BY(S) vol. 1, Wrong to Ritchie, 6 March 1944.

45. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2104, file "Post Hostilities Problems", Massey to Cranborne, 18 January 1944.

Hostilities Committees, their close liaison at official levels through the High Commissioners and also through the Prime Ministers' Meetings of 1944 and 1946 where subjects of post-hostilities planning were discussed by the Commonwealth leaders. The link with the Americans was more tenuous. Pearson believed that the chances of Canada getting useful information from the Americans would increase if they were to receive some Canadian planning papers. There was the possibility "... that our papers might have some influence on their own thinking before their views had become too crystallized."<sup>46</sup> This was a pious hope and there is no evidence to show that Canadian Working Committee papers influenced the American point of view. The problem was exacerbated by the fact that the Americans did not have a planning committee, and would not have one until General Marshall introduced his brand of discipline into the State Department in 1947. The Russians often asked for explanations of Canadian perspectives on various post-hostilities problems and Canadian diplomats at the newly-opened mission in Moscow readily demonstrated how well-briefed they were. This generosity indicated Canada's willingness to participate and its right to belong in the front row; in retrospect, cynics may speculate that Molotov thus received another impression of British plans for Europe.

The demise of the Canadian Post-Hostilities Problems Committees was the result of a number of factors: the absence of experienced personnel in the Service Departments with enough background knowledge of both military and political affairs; the lack of political feedback caused by the Prime Minister's tendency to ignore papers which could be controversial such as those dealing with Commonwealth Defence, and Norman Robertson's seeming unwillingness to commit any of Mackenzie King's thoughts on a given subject to paper. Added to this were the

---

46. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "Post Hostilities Problems", Pearson to Wrong, 27 April 1944. Pearson was also of the opinion that a paper on the relationship between functional international organizations and the general international organization would be good for the State Department since there had been some indications of interest in this area.



rapid changes in the international agenda with the founding of the United Nations and the establishment of the Council of Foreign Ministers to plan the peaceful future of Europe, and the fact that most senior officials of the Department of External Affairs were placed in other positions by the autumn of 1946.<sup>47</sup>

The findings of these committees will surface in greater detail in the ensuing chapters, but what is of significance in this context is that these committees sought to harmonize the functional principle with the Canadian desire for influence in the post-war world. By keeping abreast of international post-war planning, Canada hoped to exercise more influence on the great powers at times when they could be more receptive to Canadian wishes. Espousing functionalism when confronted with a *fait accompli* as in the case of the membership question of UNRRA could prove to be counterproductive, and although some progress had been achieved in the UNRRA case, there was no guarantee for the next time. Perhaps the committees' greatest value was that planning activity kept minds sharp, and it was a well-informed cadre of officers who would represent Canada at the myriad of international meetings and conferences during the next few years.

\* \* \*

Although Canadian communications to other governments regarding the functional principle repeatedly emphasized that there was "no thought at all of mere questions of status or prestige",<sup>48</sup> the question of international status was a corollary to Canadian functionalism. Canada was playing a role worthy of recognition in the war effort and wished to continue to do so in the peace to come, and public opinion

---

47. Wrong favoured a continued combined planning staff but this was something which Pearson, the incoming Under-Secretary, would not have found to be conducive to his style of day to day pragmatic diplomacy. DEA, General Registry File 300-B(S), Holmes to R.G. Riddell, 3 May 1948. Also interviews with John Holmes, 23 July 1980 and George Ignatieff, 2 December 1980. Holmes was the first secretary of the Working Committee and was replaced by Ignatieff when posted to London in 1944. For a thorough discussion see Munton and Page, "Planning in the East Block: The Post-Hostilities Problems Committees in Canada, 1943-1945", pp. 710-720. It may be of interest to note that there would not be another planning committee in the Department of External Affairs until 1969.

48. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2104, file "Post-Hostilities Planning", Massey to Cranborne, 18 January 1944.

and parliament were acutely aware of this fact. The controversy over the announcement of the participation of Canadian troops in the invasion of Sicily, coming ironically at the very moment of Mackenzie King's statement on the functional principle to the House of Commons on 9 July 1943, deserves brief comment in this respect.

The government had requested assurances through the Canadian Military Headquarters in London that due mention should be made of the fact that Canadian forces were participating in the invasion of Sicily - the first case of an entire Canadian division getting battle duty - since it appeared that originally only references to an Anglo-American invasion were to be made. The Prime Minister himself instructed diplomats in both capitals to insist on Canadian recognition, and Pearson in Washington quickly managed to receive an audience with President Roosevelt who agreed to include Canada in all communiques. In London, the difference in time zones had to be accounted for, as well as Massey's problem in getting an appointment with Clement Attlee, then Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs. It therefore appeared in Ottawa that the British were hesitant in according Canada its proper place in the communique beside the United States and Britain. The proper reference to Canada was made in time, Churchill issued a public statement which corrected Canadian impressions, but Mackenzie King was still furious and told Malcolm MacDonald that he was willing to dissolve parliament and call an election on the entire issue of Canada receiving its deserved recognition.<sup>49</sup> Needless to say, the Prime Minister's anger did not last, but even a normally unflappable Lester Pearson believed that it was only Roosevelt's intervention which turned the tide.<sup>50</sup>

In a lengthy despatch to Attlee giving an analysis of the issue, MacDonald asserted that the controversy had acted as a sort of focal point for Canadian frustrations at the failure of Britain to recognize Canada's special status and function. This was exemplified by the issues of representation on the Combined Boards and UNRRA, and the

---

49. King Diary, 18 July 1943. For a discussion of the military aspects, see C.P. Stacy, *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945*, (Ottawa: 1970), pp. 224-228.

50. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 348, Pearson to Robertson, 12 July 1943.



tendency of the United Kingdom and the United States to issue joint statements on both war developments and high political policy without consulting other Allies. "I urge again that we should give most careful heed to this situation," MacDonald concluded. "The Canadians are watching it closely... They will not, for example, remain silent if Canada and the other Dominions are given a less important place than they think is proper in the vital discussions concerning the restoration of peace."<sup>51</sup>

"Just as we are prepared to recognize the great difference in power and responsibility between Canada and the Soviet Union," Mackenzie King told his fellow Commonwealth Prime Ministers in May 1944, "we should expect some recognition of the considerable difference between Canada and Panama."<sup>52</sup> In the exchange of cables with London regarding the formulation of what was to become the Security Council of the United Nations, Canada believed it to be unrealistic to divide the states between the great powers and the rest in deciding which states, other than the great powers, should sit on the Council: "... in our view the same selective principle which warrants a special position for the great powers should be applied as far as possible to all members of the organization..."<sup>53</sup> Canada's preoccupation with the status aspect of functionalism would become more insistent after a conference in Chicago on International Civil Aviation in November 1944 where all the Latin American countries had voted together as a bloc and had elected themselves to the Interim Council at the expense of other smaller nations with a greater functional claim. Furthermore, the emphasis on regionalism as a governing factor for non-permanent membership on a higher United Nations council, particularly by the British and the Americans, and the realization that almost half of

---

51. CAB 66/40, W.P.(43)368, despatch no. 441, MacDonald to Attlee, 6 August 1943.

52. DEA, File 7-BY(S) vol. 1, Cabinet War Committee Document no. 924, "Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization; Views Expressed on Behalf of the Government of Canada, May 1944 to January 1945"; "Extract from Statement made by Mr. Mackenzie King to the Meeting of Prime Ministers on May 11, 1944".

53. *Ibid.*, cable no. 130, Secretary of State for External Affairs to Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 2 August 1944.

the members of the proposed world organization would be from Latin America, did nothing to inspire Canadian confidence in the prospect that functionalism would receive more than just a sympathetic ear.

Mackenzie King clung to the functional principle. It was fair, just and Canadian and, according to him, expressed virtues which he had stated over twenty years earlier in his book *Industry and Humanity*. To him it was a moral precept which could lend itself to any international situation. But more than anything it was safe, because it had the unqualified support of both the people and parliament. King thought much about functionalism and in his own way sought to influence other leaders in his summit discussions with them, although this was not the case at the two Quebec conferences. When Charles deGaulle visited Ottawa in July 1944, King took a piece of paper, and speaking of world organization, pointed out to him "that there were different stages at which different nations might participate to a greater or less degree in these matters."<sup>54</sup> De Gaulle, more concerned about French islands being disposed of as bases to other powers, was probably unimpressed. Earlier, during the time of the UNRRA negotiations, King had subjected Anthony Eden to an interesting analysis of the application of functionalism, which also indicated some of the Prime Minister's other more spiritual predilections:

I explained our view by drawing a series of concentric circles and saying that I felt we should seek the present from the future, to make the beginning in the light of the ultimate... A still larger circle ultimately would be all nations of the world within this large circle and there would necessarily be a smaller group which would be the great powers, perhaps embracing the British Empire collectively... There was a difference of function of course. There would then be smaller circles for purposes of function, the creating of executives and the like...<sup>55</sup>

The above may appear to be confusing, but Mackenzie King simply believed that it would be better to plan democratically from the larger to the smaller, and in so doing, he labelled himself an inspired functionalist, much like the senior officials in his Department.

At times, Canadian application of the functional principle was not always high-minded. As mentioned earlier, Canada was sympathetic to the lesser European powers since many of their concerns regarding

---

54. King Diary, 11 July 1944.

55. King Diary, 31 March 1943.



recognition of their status ran parallel to Canada's own. Canada did not wish to be too closely associated with their position, however, and certainly in the case of UNRRA tended to see the functional principle from the point of the producer rather from that of the consumer.<sup>56</sup>

The functional principle, it is worth noting, could also be discarded when direct self-interest was at stake. When United Kingdom Ministers were considering whether they could promise support for Indian aspirations for election to the Security Council in October 1946, High Commissioner Norman Robertson acted quickly by cabling Ottawa:

In these circumstances, I suggest 'functional principle' might be given a few weeks hoist, and that our representatives abroad should be told not to encourage or promote the candidature of India for the Security Council until we have made up our minds whether India's candidature for the Security Council is, in fact, likely to prejudice our own chances of election next year.<sup>57</sup>

This is not an example of the unscrupulous arrogation of power. The functional principle was something peculiarly fitted to Canada, something which could be held onto as the lever of an adaptive foreign policy which had to endure both the rapid movement toward world organization and the unilateralism which was beginning to emanate from south of the border. It formed the basis for what would later be termed the "lapidary approach" in Canadian foreign policy and would to a degree be equated with Canada's "helpful fixer" role in the 1950s.<sup>58</sup> During 1943, the year of the inception of the functional principle, functionalism developed from an idealistic theory to a pragmatic strategy for Canada's role in a turbulent world. As the following chapters will demonstrate in greater detail, its flexible and variable nature formed the basis for Canada's new internationalism.

---

56. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, p. 42.

57. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 413, cable no. 2057, Robertson to St. Laurent, 14 October 1946.

58. See John W. Holmes, "The Changing Nature of International Organization", Canada House Lecture Series No. 8, lecture given at Canada House, London, 8 November 1979.

### CHAPTER III

#### TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, 1943-44

During 1943 and 1944 foreign policy planners in the United Kingdom and the United States devised their own preliminary schemes for a new world security organization which would replace the ill-fated League of Nations. In Ottawa, Hume Wrong, who had in late 1943 been promoted to a position expressly created for him, that of Associate Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, led a small informal group of officials in preparing Canadian views on international organization. Some of the efforts of Wrong and his group overlapped with those of the government's Post-Hostilities Problems Committees, but this was not unexpected, considering that Wrong was the pivotal figure in these committees as well. It was realized that instead of preparing a Canadian plan for the new organization, it would be more advantageous - and realistic - to prepare positions designed to meet the initiatives of the great powers, particularly those emanating from the Foreign Office in London. The United Kingdom provided Canada with almost continuous information on the state of British planning and encouraged comment, direct consultation taking place during a Prime



Minister's Meeting in May 1944. During 1943, the thrust of Canadian planning was mainly directed to the development of specialized international organizations such as the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, with increasing interest being focussed on an authority which would control international civil aviation. The functional principle was first formulated during this year and after the membership issue in UNRRA, it became the guiding element of Canadian foreign policy, although expressions of functionalism would become more sophisticated during 1944. Commonwealth consultation reached an almost frenetic level during 1944, and the year ended with two significant events: the four-power Dumbarton Oaks conference which established a blueprint for a new world security organization and an international civil aviation conference at Chicago. Though not in the mainstream of international political organization, the latter event is worth study as an example of the culmination of self-interested Canadian efforts in a specialized field and because Canadian initiatives resulted in enhanced international prestige for Canada, an arguably fleeting recognition by the rest of the world of the functional principle, and a unique role for Canada as a mediator. What follows is a record and analysis of the developments which took place before and during these two major conferences and how there emerged a qualified sort of Canadian optimism over the future of international organization by the end of 1944.

\* \* \*

"The demands of war have telescoped into four or five years the growth that might normally have taken air transport a generation to achieve," C.D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions and Supply, told the Canadian House of Commons in March 1944. "[I]t is...our intention to make every effort to ensure that the framework within which the international air transport of the future functions will be designed to promote international cooperation, not international bitterness."<sup>1</sup> With the revolution in aeronautical technology came changes in perspectives: Mercator's view of the world was rapidly becoming obsolete and Canadians began to realize that theirs was a nation which lay

---

1. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 17 March 1944, p. 1570; also King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 363, "Civil Aviation - Background Speech Material for C.D. Howe", 24 February 1944.

astride the major air routes of the world, an accident of geography which, when combined with increases in international air traffic, would make some scheme of international regulation inevitable. Howe remained good to his word and Canadian compromise positions, designed to seek middle ground between divergent British and American views while maintaining Canadian self-interest, were instrumental in helping to establish an international civil aviation authority. Before and during the civil aviation conference at Chicago in November 1944, Canada acquired some functionalist recognition in becoming, along with the United Kingdom and the United States, one of the "Big Three" in the field of international aviation. The functional principle as such only entered Canadian civil aviation policy at a late stage, since the development of policy during mid-1943 paralleled the gradual emergence of functionalism as a policy tool during the same period. The successful outcome of the Chicago conference, though qualified in the eyes of idealists and pragmatists alike within the Department of External Affairs, was nevertheless perceived as both a positive and a negative precedent for the future world security organization. This result was positive in the sense that functional recognition of the Canadian position was achieved, a Canadian document actually becoming the basis for discussion at the conference; negative in that the difficulty of achieving consensual views among a large group of nations was underscored.

Canadian interest in aviation had been a continuing one. Canada had been a signatory of the multilateral convention on the Regulation of Aerial Navigation of 1919 and all of its supplementary protocols during the next decade. Together with the United Kingdom, Ireland and Newfoundland, the senior Dominion participated in a 1936 agreement for the initiation of a Trans-Atlantic air route, which was never quite brought into operation. With the war had come - in the wake of some notorious delay - the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, which brought about the construction of aerodromes throughout the country. Meanwhile, cooperation with the Americans had resulted in the development of the North-West Staging Route to the Pacific. All told, the Royal Canadian Air Force became the fourth largest in the world, while as a major supplier, Canada was producing thousands of aeroplanes. The "national" airline, Trans-Canada Airlines, created



before the war, rapidly expanded during it. All this came under the purview of C.D. Howe, a czar-like minister with a "no nonsense" approach of getting things done efficiently and worrying about political consequences afterwards. A strong believer in free enterprise, but willing to nationalize if it meant profitable efficiency, Howe paternally referred to Trans-Canada Airlines as "my airline" and was wary of any restrictions international regulation could place on his airline's growth and of the entrepreneurial machinations of the competitor, Canadian Pacific Airlines, also founded before the war.<sup>2</sup> He was also not content to see Trans-Canada Airlines function as a junior partner or appendage of some grand British Commonwealth scheme. Nor would Canada stand idly by were the American and British companies to ignore some form of international regulation and carve up the stratosphere for themselves at the expense of smaller powers who had a functional right to participate in such decisions. With his motto of efficiency with expediency, Howe realized that some form of international regulation and control was essential.

The divergent and hence to Canada potentially dangerous perspectives of the Americans and the British provided an urgency to Canadian planning for civil aviation, especially since Canadian views, although surely self-interested and independent to a degree, would of necessity be conditioned and developed as a response to the preferences of the larger air powers. "Whatever form the future of civil aviation may take," Vincent Massey wrote from London in January 1943, "one thing is becoming clear, that the United Kingdom Government has no intention of sitting back and resigning control of the air to the Americans."<sup>3</sup> The British were concerned about what would transpire after the cessation of hostilities, particularly since a greater proportion of American production than their own had been devoted to transport aircraft, which could easily be pressed into civil service after the war. Con-

---

2. For more background on Canadian involvement in civil aviation before the war, see Robert Bothwell and J.L. Granatstein, "Canada and the Wartime Negotiations over Civil Aviation: The Functional Principle in Operation", *The International History Review* II, no. 4 (October 1980), pp. 586-7. For more on C.D. Howe and Trans-Canada Airlines see Robert Bothwell and William Kilbourn, *C.D. Howe: A Biography* (Toronto, 1979), pp. 104-119.

3. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 346, Massey to Robertson, 20 January 1943.

versely, in Washington, Adolf Berle, a New Dealer, self-confessed Anglophobe and politically appointed Assistant Secretary of State responsible for aviation matters, publicly called for "freedom of the air", though he privately confided to Lester Pearson that total "freedom" - which in Canadian and British eyes meant free rein for American private carriers - would probably prove impossible to achieve. To allay Canadian anxieties, Berle emphasized the harmonious relations between Canada and the United States, and reassured Canadian officials that there was no danger of a negotiated Anglo-American agreement without prior consultation with Canada.<sup>4</sup> Such psalms about the exemplary nature of North American bilateral relations always made Canadian policy-makers nervous, especially when they wanted to press their case to the apparently oblivious Americans. Following the report of Pearson's conversation with Berle in February 1943, the instructions from Ottawa were thus clear and precise:

[Y]ou may...assure Mr. Berle that we do not take a narrow view of what constitutes Canada's national interests in international air transport. We are conscious of the strength of our bargaining position because of our geographical position. So far as we can influence the course of events, we are determined to pursue a policy of international cooperation and collaboration - Canada is, therefore, prepared to support whatever international air policy can be demonstrated as being the best calculated to serve not only the intermediate interests of Canada but also our overriding interest in the establishment of an international order which will prevent the outbreak of a third world war.<sup>5</sup>

Interestingly, the controversy about Canadian representation on the Central Committee of UNRRA was nearing its climax at about the same time, and this may account for both the emphasis on functionalism and a feeling that what was accomplished in the establishment of specialized international organizations would act as a precedent for the general world security organization which loomed so large in the back of the minds of the officials in the East Block. It was a time of determination in official circles in Ottawa.

In London, an expatriate Canadian, Lord Beaverbrook, the Lord Privy Seal and Minister for Aircraft Production, steered the evolution

---

4. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 343, memorandum by Pearson of a conversation with Adolf A. Berle Jr., 16 February 1943; also Pearson Diary, 16 February 1943.

5. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 343, despatch no. 179, King to Canadian Minister Leighton McCarthy, 24 February 1943.



of British aviation policy with a firm hand. British planning was copious but inconclusive. A report of an interdepartmental committee, the Finlay Report, concluded in December 1943 that civil aviation was a matter of high policy which represented the choice between "internationalisation or Americanisation" and in any event the Empire had to be considered in all such deliberations. Beaverbrook's personal preference was for an Empire and Commonwealth "red line" girdling the globe and Lord Amery, the Secretary of State for India, was of like mind, wistfully believing that the United Kingdom would be in a better position to catch the Americans in the development of air routes if an inter-Empire scheme were instituted. "All we have to do is agree among ourselves," Amery wrote, "The Americans are not going to quarrel with us, even if they may not enthusiastically welcome such a policy. We shall only be following their own example and that of the French and others who will certainly reserve their colonial traffic."<sup>6</sup> Amery and others appeared to have forgotten that lack of "agreement among ourselves" had been responsible for the stillborn North Atlantic Empire route involving Canada, Ireland and the United Kingdom before the war; chances for overall agreement would surely not be improved by bringing even more disparate Commonwealth voices into the discussions. An exhaustive study was undertaken by a committee chaired by Sir Alan Barlow of the Treasury which stated in its report of March 1943 that a scheme of full internationalization without reservation of internal services would be both the most satisfactory and most radical solution to the global problem. Since "internationalization", or a system of rigid regulation of all air routes and flight frequencies would probably prove unsatisfactory to a number of countries, particularly the United States where "freedom of the air" was the slogan for the development of private air enterprise anywhere in the

---

6. C.D. Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 5 "Civil Aviation", copy of United Kingdom document R.P.(A)(43)8, "Air Transport: An Empire Policy", memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, 3 March 1943; also file 25, R.P.(42)5, "Shelmerdine Report", 5 January 1942 and R.P.(42)48, "Finlay Report", 18 December 1943. Lord Finlay believed that the question of international regulation or free competition depended greatly on policies for Imperial development. He claimed that in his report he had tried to demonstrate how the two systems could be reconciled, but concluded that they were essentially irreconcilable. Covering letter to the report from Finlay to Jowitt, 17 December 1942.

world according to demand, the Barlow Committee recommended a European system with dependencies combined with separate Empire systems.<sup>7</sup> Unanimity was not a characteristic of British planning at this stage, but it should be emphasized that this was not the case in the United States either, where the private airline companies advocating "free air" were confronted by statements by Vice-President Henry Wallace which advocated some form of international regulation.

The reports of the various British committees were passed on to Ottawa where they were analyzed and studied with interest. Although no formal replies to the various recommendations were made, Massey was requested to warn the United Kingdom that presenting proposals for international regulation to the United States at this early stage would merely court their rejection; the likelihood of substantial agreement being attained would be increased by deferring the presentation of specific proposals.<sup>8</sup> Central to this philosophy was the fact that the Americans had not yet made their position clear; once this was done, Canadian policy could become less nebulous and more concrete. Norman Robertson, the driving force behind Canada's initial approach to the questions of civil aviation, suggested the ideal compromise: an informal meeting between officials of interested nations - meaning the United Kingdom, United States and the Dominions - in Ottawa. For Mackenzie King, this suggestion was a political blessing because he could thereby quell talk that he was not willing to speak to the British, having turned down the idea of a Prime Ministers' Conference during 1943 for the official reason of lack of time and the personal one of indifference. A meeting of interested countries including the United States would avoid a separate Commonwealth conference with the appearance - at least in American eyes - of a uniform Empire policy. In his diary, the Prime Minister wrote that the Cabinet was against having an Imperial policy, the consensus being that "we should stand for a policy of our own."<sup>9</sup>

---

7. C.D. Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 5 "Civil Aviation", copy of United Kingdom document R.P.(A)(43)10, "Report of the Official Committee on Post-War Civil Aviation", 22 March 1943. See also Vincent Massey, *What's Past is Prologue* (Toronto, 1963), p. 423.

8. Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 25, Massey to Attlee, 24 May 1943.

9. King Diary, 2 June 1943; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 2 June 1943.



Arnold Heeney, the Secretary to the Cabinet, reporting to the War Committee on 18 June 1943, stated that a meeting in Ottawa between Commonwealth and American representatives appeared to be likely, although there was the possibility that the United Kingdom would suggest pre-conference Commonwealth discussions.<sup>10</sup> In the meantime, an existing Interdepartmental Committee on Civil Aviation was reconstituted as the Interdepartmental Committee on Air Transport Policy and was to advise on both domestic and international policies. C.P. Edwards, the Deputy Minister of Transport, was appointed chairman, with Norman Robertson as his deputy. Members included Clifford Clark; H.J. Symington, the President of Trans-Canada Airlines; Escott Reid of the Department of External Affairs; and John Baldwin of the Privy Council Office, who served as secretary. Symington, Reid and Baldwin would later play very significant roles in future discussions with the British and in finding compromise positions at the Chicago conference on civil aviation. By July, however, the United Kingdom had let it be known that it wished to have a large ministerial conference in Ottawa which would include China and the Soviet Union and would be preceded by Commonwealth discussions. A political blessing had become an autonomist's nightmare. Canada believed that such a preliminary meeting without the United States as a participant would be misunderstood in Washington and would provide new vigour for the campaign of the "free air" advocates. Since Canada had earlier informed the United States through talks with Berle of the strength of its bargaining position, a Commonwealth conference now could conceivably sap the strength of the Canadian position vis-à-vis the United States. A conference of Cabinet ministers could not be held because the requisite consultations between officials of the participating countries, which usually preceded all ministerial meetings, had not taken place, leaving the ground unprepared, meaning that the results of a full-scale conference would at best be inconclusive. What was more, a high-profile meeting could give Canada much unfavourable publicity for not inviting smaller powers, whose rights the functional principle was supposed to defend.<sup>11</sup> The

---

10. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 18 June 1943; also Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 25, Massey to Attlee, 24 June 1943.

11. *Ibid.*, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 2 July 1943; also Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 25, Massey to Attlee, 12 July 1943.

Cabinet wished Canada to have an indigenous policy of its own and one informal conference between the United States and the Commonwealth countries would be more conducive to the attainment of this goal.

Winston Churchill and several members of his Cabinet met twice with the Canadian Cabinet War Committee during the Allied strategy meetings at Quebec in August 1943, and startled the Canadians by taking a more strident line on civil aviation than had previous communications from the Dominions Office. In response to Churchill's remark that he found it difficult to see how the United States could take exception at the propriety of holding a "family council" on aviation in advance of a larger conference, both Mackenzie King and Howe made strong objections. Howe, undoubtedly thinking of his airline, explained that the American carriers were preparing for a large expansion of traffic after the war, including extensive developments northward over Canada. It would therefore be exceedingly unwise for Canada to embark on any formulation of policy with other nations before having discussions with the United States. The Canadian Prime Minister predictably raised the shibboleth of a common Imperial policy, believing that other countries would interpret Commonwealth discussions in such fashion and that subsequent conferences would thus be prejudiced. Churchill promised to discuss this matter with President Roosevelt, who was of course also in Quebec, but by the time of the second meeting of the British and Canadian Cabinets two weeks later he had not, and repeated his adage that the United States was unlikely to object to "our right to family councils on these matters." Canada then bowed to the inevitable, agreeing to attend an informal and non-binding Commonwealth conference, but not before Howe stated quite unequivocally that Canadian policy would be based upon the free exchange of air traffic and a strong international authority with powers of control and regulation. Here the British Prime Minister revealed *en passant* that although he had not spoken to the President about Commonwealth discussions they had exchanged views on the nature of the international authority, which Roosevelt thought should have a central council of the great powers, whereas Churchill was enamoured of the idea of a stellated system of regional councils responsible to the great powers. Of course, Mackenzie King disagreed fundamentally with the great power approach, asserting that some method should be sought which



would give equal apportionments of rights, functions and responsibilities. Direction of the war had been in the hands of the United Kingdom and the United States, but that power would not be theirs in times of peace.<sup>12</sup> Following the Quebec conference, Churchill assured Pearson in Washington that Roosevelt would draw no wrong conclusions from a preliminary meeting, which, Churchill said, would be held in any case, with or without Canadian participation. Canada should not be worried, he intoned in histrionic fashion, there would not be as many stupendous developments in civil aviation as some people thought.<sup>13</sup> Churchill cabled Mackenzie King on 14 September to assure him that the American President harboured no objections, and also commented that he understood preliminary American views to be largely concerned with private ownership and reservation of international traffic to international companies - theirs of course.<sup>14</sup> Wary Canadian agreement to attend Commonwealth discussions in London officially came one week later.

The Commonwealth conversations took place in early October 1943. C.D. Howe - who now appropriately chose to fly the Atlantic after experiencing a torpedo sinking in 1941 - led the Canadian delegation and was assisted by H.J. Symington, who to his consternation, was recognized in London as an adviser and not a delegate. Baldwin served as secretary and Massey joined the group for the discussions. There had been a considerable amount of nervousness in Ottawa before the meeting and a lengthy report from the Interdepartmental Committee outlined several of the possible questions of policy which could arise during the conference. In addition to declaring that the international organization of civil aviation was inextricably intertwined with any proposed international security organization, a civil aviation settlement should also acknowledge the principles of economic colla-

---

12. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 11 & 13 August 1943; also King Diary, 13 August 1943.

13. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 22, Pearson to King, 11 September 1943. See also Pearson, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, pp. 231-2.

14. Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 25, cable no. 141, Churchill to King, 14 September 1943; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 15 & 22 September 1943.

boration which had been accepted by the United Nations and which included "the elimination of all forms of discrimination in international commerce." Canada would definitely not agree to any British proposals advocating a jointly-owned and controlled Commonwealth airlines corporation, an Empire Air Board, or regional imperial corporations. Those concepts failed to recognize Canada's role as an air power in its own right, its special relations with the United States, and involved "a rather challenging extension" of the *inter se* doctrine of Commonwealth relations. The view contributed by the Department of External Affairs to this memorandum was that an effective scheme of international regulation would ease any situations of strained relations between the larger air powers, would rationalize air transport leading to lower costs of carriage, and in practical Canadian terms, would provide a politically acceptable method of constructing and maintaining extensive ground facilities in the north. The requisite small surrender of sovereignty would be outweighed by the benefits, but it appeared that there would be great practical difficulties in obtaining any agreement on proposals for international regulation, since nations would not be able to agree on the extent of control.<sup>15</sup> This hypothesis would be proven at the conference at Chicago one year later.

In all instances, there had to be adequate recognition of Canada's leading role in civil aviation, and the fact that Howe headed the delegation was insurance enough that the interests of Trans-Canada Airlines would be well looked after. Paradoxically, a scheme of regulation under an international authority was regarded by Canada at this point as a counterweight to Imperial centralization tendencies, instead of as a means to counteract the more plausible and the unknown: a continental system dominated by the United States which would have posed a greater threat to Canadian independence, particularly if the British and the Americans failed to agree.

Fears of being confronted with grand Commonwealth schemes were groundless, and Beaverbrook, like Howe, gave the impression of being more eager to get the job finished rather than to embark on tedious

---

15. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, document no. 626, "Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Air Transport Policy", 28 September 1943.



discussions, resulting in a greater disposition on his part to meet Canadian views for the creation of a strong international civil aviation authority and the free exchange of air traffic, as well as Australian concerns for a greater role in the Pacific. Beaverbrook placed somewhat more stress on the idea of an "all-red" route than on the establishment of an international authority, but here the emphasis now was on bilateral cooperation and sharing of routes, as opposed to centralized direction. The Canadians were pleased: the proposed British Commonwealth global route appeared not to dictate any great commitment on anyone's part, and the absence of firm British opposition to a strong international authority appeared to indicate acceptance in principle.<sup>16</sup> In international negotiations, agreement in principle is often far from full agreement in practice. Indeed, there were enough nuances on the subject of international regulation to keep the London discussions going on indefinitely.

The British introduced six "freedoms", designed to express the rights of the members of an international civil aviation organization: the right of innocent passage, or the freedom of an aircraft to cross the airways of a member state; the right to land for non-traffic purposes such as repairs, refueling and emergencies; the freedom to land passengers and cargo from the aircraft's country of origin; the right to convey passengers and cargo between two countries neither the country of origin of the aircraft; and the right to convey between two points in one country, not the country of origin. These freedoms, of which the Dominions had been aware earlier, were products of the fertile minds of officials in the Air Ministry, many of whom favoured a strong international authority. "Freedoms" were not the sort of thing to interest either Beaverbrook or Howe, both of whom believed more in the realities of "give and take" than in idealistic platitudes. Nonetheless, the first four freedoms would later be incorporated into a draft Canadian convention for the international civil aviation organization, which would be utilized in an

---

16. DEA, General Registry file 3-C(s), John Baldwin to Escott Reid, 13 October 1943; also interview with John Baldwin, 17 November 1980.

amended form as the basis for discussion at the Chicago conference.<sup>17</sup> During the London conversations, security questions, to which the Department of External Affairs had attached some importance since they would relate to a general world organization, were practically ignored. Instead, debate focussed on matters of definition, such as what exactly constituted internal and international service, and questions of membership in the proposed organization, especially the relationship between members at large and the directing body. UNRRA was still in the Canadian mind.

Howe and Beaverbrook shared many private discussions, the former making it clear that Canadian-American trans-border flights were *sui generis* and should therefore be exempted from any international scheme, while the latter pressed his case for imperial air links. There was some concern on the part of Symington and Baldwin as to the frequency of these meetings, and Baldwin was charged with extracting the vital points from Howe over breakfast every morning in order to have something to send back to Ottawa. During these conversations, Beaverbrook agreed that Canada should have equal rights on the route between the United Kingdom and Canada; that Canada should operate to the British West Indies and Latin America without British competition; and that a Pacific route should be operated jointly by

---

17. There has been a certain amount of mythology surrounding these freedoms. John Holmes in his book, *The Shaping of Peace* vol. 1 (p. 64), and in his Canada House lecture of 8 November 1979 (P.7), refers to the first four freedoms as being a special Canadian contribution. If they were, it is only because they were used to preface the Canadian draft convention which was used as the basis for discussion at the Chicago conference. Professors Bothwell and Granatstein in their article "Canada and the Wartime Negotiations over Civil Aviation: The Functional Principle in Operation", correctly identify the freedoms as a British invention (p.592), but erringly state that Canada only learned of their existence at the British Commonwealth conversations in October 1943. The Dominions and India had in fact received a circular telegram from the Dominions Office on 3 July 1943 outlining the six British freedoms. DEA, file 3-C(s), copy of United Kingdom document A.T.L.(43)1, "Civil Air Transport; British Commonwealth Conversations; Draft Agenda and Relevant Documents", 9 October 1943. The creator of the six freedoms was William Hildred of the Air Ministry. Interview with John Baldwin, 17 November 1980.



Australia, New Zealand and Canada without British participation.<sup>18</sup> In a *quid pro quo*, a memorandum on the "All-British Air Route", prepared by Beaverbrook and Howe and presented to a sub-committee of the High Commissioners, was sufficiently bland to warrant Canadian acceptance, placing the onus on individual countries for the establishment and operation of such a route.<sup>19</sup> Of greatest significance, however, was agreement among the participants for an international air authority comprised of state actors only, and not corporations. In a letter to Heeney regarding British Commonwealth cooperation, Baldwin opined: "I do not think we have got into any difficulties as yet," though he added, "but unless great care is exercised we may."<sup>20</sup>

The "great care" referred to Howe, who had accepted Beaverbrook's invitation to go with him to Washington directly for exploratory conversations with the Americans. In Ottawa, Norman Robertson immediately drew this to the Prime Minister's attention, believing that the political implications of a Canadian Cabinet Minister going on a journey of this kind as an apparent member of a single delegation representing the "British Commonwealth and Empire" were quite serious indeed.<sup>21</sup> Howe also erred at what was to be a joint press conference. When Beaverbrook failed to appear, Howe, not as talented in the art of obfuscation as Mackenzie King, was given the delicate task of explaining the "All-British Air Route" to a press eager for even an inkling of an imperial airline. Howe's remarks were misconstrued, the stories appeared in Canadian newspapers, and upon the urgings of Baldwin and Symington - or perhaps even without them - Howe agreed to return to Ottawa before going to the United States. As it happened, and perhaps fortunately, given Howe's somewhat awkward lack of discretion, the proposed Washington talks were eventually

---

18. DEA, file 3-C(s), Baldwin to Reid, 13 October 1943.

19. Howe Papers, vol. 101, file 25, United Kingdom document A.T.L.(43)4, "British Commonwealth Conversations: All British Air Route", 13 October 1943.

20. DEA, file 3-C(s), Baldwin to Heeney, 19 October 1943.

21. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2346, memorandum from Robertson to King, 14 October 1943. The British embassy in Washington had no knowledge of the planned visit. DEA, file 3-C(s), cable WA5337, Pearson to Robertson, 27 October 1943.

cancelled due to alleged American unpreparedness.<sup>22</sup>

In a report to the Cabinet War Committee following the Commonwealth conversations, the Interdepartmental Committee noted that articles for a draft convention for the international authority "to protect Canadian interests" were being prepared for the use of Canadian participants at any future conferences, it being uncertain whether there would be conferences among selected powers or a general conference, the Americans not yet having indicated their preference. In addition, the belief was reiterated that the views of the countries of the British Commonwealth should remain fluid until discussions with the other leading United Nations, particularly the United States, had taken place. Evident also in these notions of self-interest was the functional principle: "If the voting power of the various member nations in the international air transport assembly is to be proportionate to their importance in air transport, Canada considers that its voting strength should be relatively high."<sup>23</sup>

The Canadian draft convention, a product of the superior hand of Escott Reid and the technical expertise of John Baldwin, both of whom had worked together in the Canadian Institute of International Affairs during its pioneering years a decade earlier, was accepted as a basis for Canadian policy by the Cabinet War Committee on 20 January 1944. Stirringly appealing to the wartime imagination and cleverly to American emotions by being prefaced with the first four

---

22. Escott Reid favoured forbidding Howe from holding any further press conferences: "We are being made to look very foolish in the eyes of members and officials of the United Kingdom Government, who are familiar with the long exchange of correspondence which we had with the United Kingdom on the convening of this preliminary Empire meeting. Not only have we gone back on what we insisted on for three months, but we have advertised to the world that we have agreed to a united front - the very thing that we said would prejudice the success of future international discussions." Robertson did not agree with Reid's proposal. DEA, file 3-C(s), memorandum from Reid to Robertson, 19 October 1943; also memorandum from Baldwin to Heeney, 25 October 1943. Baldwin has commented in retrospect that his fears of Howe being trapped by Beaverbrook were exaggerated. Interview with John Baldwin, 17 November 1980.

23. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, document no. 650, "Report from the Interdepartmental Committee on Air Transport on Commonwealth Air Conversations", 9 November 1943.



of the British freedoms, the convention was designed to hold middle ground between the United States and the United Kingdom, while at the same time ensuring that a strong Canadian voice would be heard, especially on the issue of short trans-boundary flights which would not be subject to international control. The convention anticipated what was feasible in Canadian eyes and thus did not suggest complete control by the authority over all aspects of civil aviation including management, since this would have alienated the United States, and probably C.D. Howe as well. Essentially, the convention called for the establishment of an international civil aviation organization consisting of an assembly of all members and an executive body operating under the aegis of the anticipated general security organization. Such important matters as fixing rates, licensing of carriers and frequency of service would be among the responsibilities of the international authority.<sup>24</sup>

The draft convention was sent to Washington and London, raising mild interest in the former capital and ire in the latter. The British had wished to consider the convention before its transmission to the United States, since at first sight it could pose difficulties for the United Kingdom, particularly in running services to the colonies. This request was not unreasonable, considering the way the British had sent their papers to Canada earlier, but in their haste and eagerness to influence the Americans, Canadian officials only learned of British concerns when it was already too late. On the other hand, there was an element of self-preservation in the Canadian action, because officials sensed that Beaverbrook was preparing for bilateral Anglo-American discussions which would not include Canada and the convention's release could therefore stay his hand.

At Canada House, Charles Ritchie succinctly summarized the situation in terms which also had broader implications:

The antithesis between the Canadian and the United Kingdom position is clear. The Ottawa Post-Hostilities Working Committee no doubt consider the London Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee's views to be Imperialistic in the narrow sense, and leading to inevitable

---

24. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, document no. 693, "Draft Convention, International Civil Aviation Authority", 8 January 1944.

future rivalries. The London Post-Hostilities Planning Sub-Committee no doubt will consider the Ottawa views utopian, unrealistic and dangerous to the essential life lines of British security.<sup>25</sup>

At the same time the United Kingdom was surprised to receive an American invitation for tripartite discussions with the United States and Canada, an invitation which did not include the other Dominion governments which had participated in the October conversations in London. On the defensive, the British were clearly not concerned with Canadian functionalism but rather with American efforts to control the skies after the war, and in Washington Lord Halifax, the British ambassador, was instructed to press the Americans for immediate bilateral discussions. A despatch, circulated to the Dominion, featured language blunter than what was usual for British despatches: "It will not be possible for us to sit back and watch this process and we shall be obliged to take immediate counter-measures to meet American competition."<sup>26</sup> Australian pride, which had peaked with the signing of the "ANZAC Agreement" with New Zealand in January 1944 for mutual cooperation in foreign policy, was wounded, since it appeared that Canada had ignored a Commonwealth understanding for consultation of the past October. John Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia, informed Mackenzie King that "The Governments of the British Commonwealth might find themselves at a serious disadvantage without a clearer understanding of principles between themselves than the October conversations were able to achieve."<sup>27</sup> The Canadian convention was leaked by the British - Beaverbrook was after all an adroit news-

---

25. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "Post-Hostilities Planning", memorandum by Charles Ritchie, "Memorandum on Civil Air Transport and World Security Problems", 7 March 1944.

26. DEA, File 3-C(s), circular cable D245, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to Dominions Governments, 18 February 1944; also circular cable D89, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 18 January 1944.

27. *Ibid.*, cable no. 4, John Curtin to Mackenzie King, 10 March 1944. Australia was also embarrassed by leaked plans for a possible Four Power conference plus Canada which was thought would take place later in March.



paperman - to an American journal and Howe was forced to make the plan public in the House of Commons on 17 March 1944.<sup>28</sup> It should be added that the Canadians were unrepentant and took justifiable pride in their document, even though the timing of its public release was not exactly propitious.

A more thorny problem between Canada and the United Kingdom was the Canadian lease of the air base at Goose Bay, Newfoundland, for purposes of defence. Negotiations between Canada and Newfoundland had taken two years but were stalled because of a British demand for use of the base for military purposes for the period of the 99-year lease. Continued Canadian refusals were centred on the notion that it would be difficult to refuse the United States similar concessions and could cause further difficulties if Newfoundland should decide to become part of Canada in the near future. This was not settled to Canadian advantage until November 1944.<sup>29</sup>

With all this division there was virtually no hope of having constructive talks, and at any rate there still existed a great deal of confusion as to who was to have consultations with whom and when. The United States embarked on a flurry of concurrent bilateral discussions with those nations chiefly concerned with international civil aviation questions. Berle and a flying entourage stopped in Montreal for two days while en route to London, at which time it was made clear to Canadian officials that the United States would only be prepared to accept the first two freedoms, the right of innocent passage and the right to land for non-traffic purposes. The Canadian

---

28. Mackenzie King regretted not having made the statement himself since he felt it was for the Prime Minister to make pronouncements on world policy. "The policy is as fine as anything the government of Canada has done at any time...Howe would never have made the statement he did today if I had not pressed the whole matter day in and day out through the Cabinet. The strongest opposition to the policies enunciated came from Howe himself." King Diary, 17 March 1944. See also Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 17 March 1944, pp. 1570-1587.

29. DEA, Papers of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 823, memorandum by R.A. MacKay, "Memorandum on Goose Bay Air Base for the High Commissioner of the United Kingdom", 20 March 1944; also Privy Council Office Files, Series 18, vol. 68, file D-12-5, C.J. Burchell (Canadian High Commissioner to Newfoundland) to Robertson, 2 March 1944.

convention was subsequently rejected in London by both Berle and Beaverbrook, and it appeared as if Canadian civil aviation planning had all been for naught. (At a Prime Minister's Meeting held in London in May 1944, which chiefly addressed the issue of the proposed world security organization, Mackenzie King effectively laid to rest any vestiges of a common imperial policy in civil aviation, or in anything else for that matter.) Meanwhile in Ottawa the draft convention was being revised, and in Washington the American bilateral discussions with interested countries, which had been intended to be of short duration, dragged on, discussions with India for example not finishing until mid-August. By the end of July, Berle admitted that his series of bilateral meetings had failed to reach a common basis of agreement, which really meant that the United States had failed to persuade other countries of the need for individual governments to increase flight frequencies of their own accord, something which the American airline companies dearly desired, so as not to have their expansion controlled by an international authority. This issue would become the major point of debate at the general conference in Chicago.

In Washington, Pearson, ever-ready to take the initiative, thought "that the way is now open to Canada to embark on bilateral discussions itself in an effort to discover what sort of amendments might be made in our draft convention in order to make it a satisfactory basis of discussion at a preliminary conference of the eight powers or so principally concerned."<sup>30</sup> But Howe, remembering the consequences of bad timing, wisely counselled restraint, and was of the opinion that the international situation should develop further before a Canadian convention in revised form could be re-affirmed. A week-end of debate in the wilds of New Brunswick with Beaverbrook and Berle did not make Howe optimistic either: "The time we spent together was devoted largely to fishing which was about as productive as our talks on civil aviation."<sup>31</sup>

---

30. DEA, File 3-C(s), Pearson to Robertson, 28 July 1944. Pearson believed that the Americans were conducting these bilateral talks as preliminaries to traditional bilateral agreements on transit and landing rights and in lieu of an international authority. Despatch no. 1728, Pearson to King, 11 July 1944.

31. *Ibid.*, Howe to Robertson, 24 August 1944.



The United States at least ended the uncertainty of when and where a general conference should take place by issuing invitations to the countries comprising the United Nations to meet in Chicago in November 1944. After an exchange of messages with London which assured Mackenzie King that there would in no sense of the word be an imperial policy, renewed Commonwealth discussions were held in Montreal in October just before the general conference. Not surprisingly, there had been little progress since the Commonwealth nations had last met a year earlier. Moreover, repeated Canadian efforts to convince Churchill to invite Ireland on the basis of its position as an air power and to indicate that Ireland was welcome in Commonwealth circles had proved futile. The Canadian delegation, under the leadership of Symington, had been instructed to continue to support the principles established in the original draft convention and to keep a revised and more detailed draft version in hand as a possible basis for discussion if the climate worsened.<sup>32</sup> The meetings were therefore fraught with difficulties, not the least of which was a harder attitude on the part of the United Kingdom which seemed to go back on the promises made to Canada a year earlier regarding a free hand in the Caribbean and half of trans-Atlantic traffic. Yet agreement was attained amongst the Commonwealth nations for the creation of a Commonwealth Air Transport Council which would act as an advisory body once the new organization was in operation.<sup>33</sup> And in spite of the firmer British line, Lord Swinton, who had replaced Beaverbrook, had been instructed to be somewhat more conciliatory on other matters, so as to avoid sending the Canadians into the arms of the Americans. As a result, and also because the British anticipated American refusal, the revised Canadian draft convention was accepted as a document which could be used as a foundation for an international regulatory agency. The most

---

32. DEA, General Registry file 72-MK-4-40C, I.C.A.T.P. Document no. 40, "General Instructions for Canadian Delegation to International Air Conference", 17 October 1944.

33. Howe Papers, vol. 97, file 61-6, "Canada and International Civil Aviation", 22 March 1945. The British believed the creation of the Commonwealth Air Transport Council to be the major accomplishment of this conference. United Kingdom, CAB 66, W.P.(44)628, "Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Air", 8 November 1944.

significant change in the revised convention was that it moved toward a compromise between the American and British positions, principally in that the right to fix rates had now been taken from the international authority and given to the operators. Allowance was also made for a transitional period following the war in which bilateral agreements between member nations could be made. The functional principle was also evident, as it had been in the first convention, in the form of an International Air Transport Board consisting of the eight states most concerned with international air transport, as well as four others elected by the proposed Assembly. At the Chicago conference on international aviation, this convention would receive favourable publicity, especially in some of the American newspapers because it represented a compromise initiative to bring some order to the international fracas of the past two years. Before this, however, at least one British observer had privately commented that "the Canadian Convention is certainly evidence of an admirable state of mind."<sup>34</sup> The stage was being prepared for Canadian mediation at Chicago.

The conference commenced on 1 November, and within the first week the representatives of what had grown to be 52 participating nations realized that the struggle was between the United States and the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union having refused to attend. The other participants refrained from taking sides openly, as did Canada, preferring to spend time "revising the revisions" to the draft convention through consultation with the Americans and the British in the hope of finding common ground. Canada also took pains to defend the functional principle, when this was assailed by some of the smaller powers who were lobbying for a great power council. Following a round of unproductive discussions between the United States and the United Kingdom, Berle issued a challenge to the conference by asking

---

34. DEA, file 3-C(s), extract of letter from Philip Noel-Baker to Escott Reid in letter from Reid to Robertson, 11 October 1944. During the Chicago conference, the Wartime Information Board office in Washington monitored American newspapers. DEA, file 72-MK-40C Part 2, Special Report no. 2, supplement no. 4, Press Analysis Section, Wartime Information Board, Canadian Embassy Washington, "The International Civil Aviation Conference, Chicago, as Reported in the United States Press, November 19-20, 1944."



whether any state cared to submit an acceptable formula for discussion. Canada did not have to be asked twice - Howe laid the Canadian convention before the conference, and although there was no appreciative reaction amongst delegates for several days, the convention was gradually recognized as a basis for discussion.<sup>35</sup>

To say that Adolf Berle and Lord Swinton did not get along would be an understatement. Neither man trusted the other and to a degree both were not allowed much manoeuvrability - Swinton only moved when strings were pulled in London and Berle was often at the mercy of the Congressional members of his delegation and the various interests they represented. In addition, Berle was also supposed to be the impartial chairman of the conference. C.D. Howe, who had the stature and the personality required to intervene effectively between the two men, could not, because the pressures of the conscription crisis necessitated his presence in the Cabinet in Ottawa. This left Symington, Baldwin and Reid to handle the corridor diplomacy at the over-crowded Stevens Hotel and to participate in tripartite discussions with the Americans and the British - known as the "A-B-C talks" - for two weeks while the other delegations idled and angered.

It was Escott Reid who at last succeeded in having wide-ranging private discussions with Berle. He refuted Berle's preference for having two British Commonwealth seats on the directing body, stressed the functional principle, listened in silence to charges that the United Kingdom was working in collusion with Pan American Airways to wreck the conference, and often steered the conversation onto the higher level of the recently-concluded Dumbarton Oaks meetings on the world security organization. Reid also told Berle that he believed tension would arise between the United States and the Soviet Union within the next decade and that Canada therefore favoured a strong convention because it would be in the buffer zone between these two great powers.<sup>36</sup> There was some hope that the Soviet Union would adhere to the result of this conference.

The "freedoms" caused most of the controversy during the conference. To the four freedoms which Canada had taken from the

---

35. DEA, file 3-C(s), Reid to Robertson, 9 November 1944.

36. DEA, file 72-MK-4-40C Part 2, memorandum from Reid to Robertson, 10 November 1944.

United Kingdom to place in the draft convention, now being used as the basis for discussion, the United States added a fifth, which called for the right to unload and take on traffic at intermediate points during the flight of the aircraft. Deemed to be essential to the profit of any airline and to smaller countries which did not possess large fleets, the acceptance of this freedom would give the giant and well-equipped American companies free rein, something which was anathema to the United Kingdom. By 20 November all participants at the conference were tired, there still being no agreement on the fifth freedom. The British were prepared to recruit support for the view that the conference had been a success, that the first two freedoms were acceptable, and that bilateral discussions could now continue. Berle echoed this weary felling, but suggested that the work could not be completed because it had been too ambitious a dream, believing that an interim agreement was all that could be achieved at this point. Other participants, however, were not satisfied with suddenly bringing the conference to an abrupt stop over a single issue, albeit a difficult one. Also, many of the technical committees dealing with equipment and safety standards among other things, had not yet completed their work, which had been characterized by more agreement between nations than at the larger political discussions. Following the speeches by Swinton and Berle, Symington addressed the plenary session, and in a terse short speech expressed his great disappointment and, he stated, the chagrin which must be felt by the entire world, at the failure to reach agreement on the substantial points before the conference. Canada would continue to strive to bring the United States and the United Kingdom together on the most crucial points. The reaction to the speech brought some surprises, since the Latin Americans, who had been expected to obediently follow the American lead for an interim agreement, requested a twenty-four hour study delay. Australia and New Zealand supported Symington. In a subsequent fiery speech, Fiorello LaGuardia, the energetic mayor of New York and member of the American delegation, threw the gauntlet at both the United Kingdom and the United States for failing to provide any leadership.<sup>37</sup> The conference continued, with Canada having been publicly

---

37. DEA, file 3-C(s), Baldwin to Heeney, 23 November 1944.



recognized as the mediator. From now on, anything which fell short of some form of permanent document would be interpreted as failure.

Attempting a compromise, Canada proposed something new: an "escalator" clause, a complicated system of ratios and percentages designed to allow for increases of frequency of flights through measured capacity. The Americans insisted that the "escalator" clause should apply to their fifth freedom, the right to unload and take on traffic at intermediate points; the British were prepared to accept the clause only under the third freedom: traffic picked up in the country of the aircraft's origin.<sup>38</sup> Again both countries realized excellent commercial opportunities when they saw them - the freedom of exploitation which the Americans would have under freedom five, and the protection the British would enjoy on flights from and between the colonies with freedom three. It was over these differences, which seemed irreconcilable, that the conference finally ground to a halt, with agreement expressed over an "agree to disagree" formula.

Somewhat unusually, therefore, two agreements were offered for signature: one containing the first two freedoms of the right of transit and the right to land for non-traffic purposes; the other the full five freedoms, which quickly lapsed following the conference. Most countries, including Canada, signed the former which, in essence, stipulated a multilateral guarantee of rights and as such represented a creditable achievement.<sup>39</sup> Canada would not concede the rights of

---

38. DEA, file 3-C(s), Baldwin to Heeney, 29 November 1944. The United Kingdom had been put in a difficult position as a result of a decoding error which had left the word "not" out of instructions from London telling Swinton not to accept the escalator clause. In Ottawa, Ray Atherton, the American ambassador, suggested to Robertson that a convention should be signed without the United Kingdom. Robertson disagreed: "Now that the roles of the United Kingdom and the United States appeared to be reversed, I thought we in Canada would see very much the same objections to setting up an international organization without the United Kingdom as we had earlier seen to the suggestion that such an organization might conceivably be set up without the United States." Memorandum from Robertson to King, 29 November 1944.

39. See Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace* vol. 1, p.65; also Canada, *Treaty Series*, 1944, No. 36, "Final Act of the International Civil Aviation Conference", 7 December 1944.

the other three freedoms - the right to land traffic from an aircraft's country of origin, the right to pick up traffic from an aircraft's country of origin, and the right to convey traffic between intermediate points not the country of origin - unless they were part of a global multilateral system for the ordered control of air transport, as originally envisioned. By far the greatest practical accomplishments of the conference - and the least public - were the many technical agreements which would allow for consistency of operational standards, a convention which dealt with legal questions such as navigational rights and territoriality, and a permanent organization which would eventually have its headquarters in Montreal.<sup>40</sup>

The Final Act of the conference, much of it containing Canadian prose from its own draft convention, provided for an assembly to meet annually and a council of twenty-one, which was considerably larger than Canada had desired. Because of the clamour raised by the smaller powers, the criteria for representation on the council wildly exceeded the Canadian interpretation of the functional principle, as the council was not only to include the major air powers, but nations which provided the most substantial contributions in ground facilities as well. Geographic regional representation was made a tenet and was reluctantly accepted by the Canadians, who realized the necessity for geographic representation in the specialized field of air transport. But when it came to the elections, any functionalist precepts were discarded in a stampede for prestige. The results were bizarre, if not utterly absurd, with Canada elected only as a contributor of facilities, Mexico as a major air power and El Salvador ostensibly for geographic reasons. Norway offered to withdraw in favour of India until Berle told the Latin Americans they had over-reached themselves,

---

40. It was Berle's idea to have the headquarters of the Provisional International Civil Aviation Organization, later to become the I.C.A.O., in Montreal. DEA, file 72-MK-4-40C Part 2, memorandum from Reid to Robertson, 10 November 1944. Berle resigned from the State Department shortly before the end of the conference, partly because of the feeling in Congress that he was moving too far toward "international control", but mainly because Cordell Hull, his political *eminence grise*, had retired from the position of Secretary of State and had been replaced by Edward R. Stettinius, Jr.



and so Cuba nobly withdrew instead.<sup>41</sup> It came as a rude shock to the Canadians that not everyone shared their moral tone when it came to elections to international councils, but there was also a belief among Canadian policy-makers that international civil aviation, because it was dynamic and had a propensity for rapid growth, might prove to be an allowable exception. The elections however led the Canadians to a firmer resolve to press for the recognition of functionalism in the charter of the world security organization which had been provisionally planned by the great powers at Dumbarton Oaks earlier in the autumn.

I had never really believed before I came to this conference that there was anything very much in the idea that Canada could be a mediator in a matter of importance between the United States and the United Kingdom. At this conference, however, we have acted as a mediator and our mediation has been pretty successful...I doubt whether we would have been forced into the position of being mediators or honest brokers between the United States and the United Kingdom if it had not been that we had put before the conference the only complete and detailed plan.<sup>42</sup>

Escott Reid's words ring true: Canada had been a mediator, had been one of the "Big Three", had dispensed advice, had acquired influence, but most important, had gained experience. Although the results of two years of negotiations and policy developments within the Canadian government had fallen short of the grand scheme of international regulation of the skies originally envisioned, Canada had succeeded in achieving what C.D. Howe had originally stated it would strive to do: promote a framework for international civil aviation which would foster international cooperation. In doing so Canada attained a sustained status at Chicago which would never again be achieved by any Canadian delegation at any specialized conference. Canada had demonstrated "enlightened self-interest"; self-interest in the sense that policies were advanced which would benefit Canada, enlightenment because when discord appeared certain, Canada could have withdrawn into its hemispheric shell and pursued safe bilateral aviation agreements. Canadian idealism would not allow this recourse.

\* \* \*

---

41. DEA, file 3-C(s), memorandum by Baldwin, "International Civil Aviation Conference, November-December 1944", 13 December 1944; see also *Treaty Series*, 1944, No. 36, "Final Act of the International Civil Aviation Conference."

42. Reid Papers, vol. 5, Reid to Robertson, 6 December 1944, not sent. Also interview with Escott Reid, 12 June 1980.

The Chicago conference on civil aviation had become a significant signpost on the road toward a general world security organization. International civil aviation is easily studied in isolation as an important test case for Canadian policies, but it must be realized that organization of the air served as a microcosm of a larger process developing during the years 1943 and 1944. In London, a "United Nations Plan" had been conceived as early as January 1943; in the State Department in Washington, Leo Pasvolksy, a Special Assistant charged with planning for international organizations, was busily engaged in preparing an American equivalent; and in Ottawa, Robertson, Wrong and others, both individually and collectively, were giving thought to possible policy responses to great power initiatives for a world security organization. The Canadians would not receive a detailed plan from the great powers until May 1944 when the United Kingdom unveiled its proposals to the Dominion prime ministers in London.

The Moscow or Four Power Declaration, discussed by the Americans and the British at the Quebec Conference of August 1943 and signed in Moscow on 30 October, represented a commitment on the part of the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and China for the earliest possible establishment of a general international organization which would be based upon the principle of the sovereign equality of nations. Canada was taken into the confidence of the United Kingdom at an early stage in the planning of the declaration and contributed a suitable - the British thought ingenious<sup>43</sup> - amendment to the fifth clause which would impose an obligation on the great powers to consult not only each other but the other United Nations as well in matters pertaining to the development of the new organization. The functional principle was of course inherent in this amendment and was recognized as such by Clement Attlee, then Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs: "The principle is one to which Canada attaches great importance, and, quite apart from Canada's position, there is much to be said for bringing out more clearly in the document that the Great Powers are acting with the assent of the smaller powers and in consultation with them where practicable."<sup>44</sup> Thus there was disappointment in Ottawa when the final

---

43. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U4425/402/70, minute by Gladwyn Jebb on cable no. 147, King to Attlee, 17 September 1943.

44. United Kingdom, CAB 66, W.P.(43)412, "Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs", 22 September 1943.



document did not in fact bring this out as lucidly as was hoped; the best that Wrong could do was to note that "the Moscow Declaration is an accurate description of the League of Nations." In addition, he recommended to Robertson that an American proposal to have all the United Nations formally adhere to the Declaration should be rejected. Adherence had been appropriate in the case of the Atlantic Charter of 1942, but now the proposal of the United States would be seen as "an invitation from the big boys to the little fellows to sign on the dotted line."<sup>45</sup> In Canadian minds it would have been better for the Americans to expand upon the Moscow Declaration, not to repeat it, and fortunately for Canada, the American proposal was eventually dropped. Further developments were necessary, it being too early for Canada to make any suggestions in the absence of more tangible proposals from the great powers.

Before the proposals surfaced, Canada had to again assert itself as an independent international actor. In October 1943, on the eve of the establishment of the United Nations War Crimes Commission in London, the Soviet Union issued a memorandum to the other great powers which stated that the sixteen federated republics of the Soviet Union should, like the British Dominions, each have the right to direct individual participation in the Commission. Failing that, the Soviet Union would simply not participate. There was consternation at this in both Ottawa and London, and the British submitted an analysis of the recently amended Soviet constitution, demonstrating how the Dominions and the Soviet Republics differed, an effort which did not fall upon sympathetic Soviet ears. After several meetings between Dana Wilgress, the Canadian Minister in the Soviet Union, and Vaycheslav Molotov, the Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs, the Soviet interpretation of international status - at least in this instance - was amicably resolved and certainly hastened the subsequent elevation of

---

45. DEA, General Registry file 7-V(s), Wrong, "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary", 16 December 1943. A cable was sent to London which stated that it would be unfortunate to emphasize unnecessarily a distinction in status between the signatories of the Moscow Declaration and the other United Nations by having them merely concur in a principle agreed on by the largest powers. Cable no. 199, King to Attlee, 19 December 1943.

the Canadian legation to an embassy.<sup>46</sup> The event may have served as a Soviet *ballon d'essai* for tactics later at Dumbarton Oaks and Yalta, and was definitely a shock to Canadian policy-makers who believed that the recognition Canada had achieved by this point through the war effort had surely obviated the need for homilies on Canadian statehood.

The lengthy membership issue of UNRRA, the Combined Boards, and civil aviation developments during 1943 were all supposed to have laid to rest prevalent feelings among Conservatives in the British War Cabinet that the "British Commonwealth and Empire" ought to comprise one of the great powers in a world security organization. Churchill was the chief proponent of this philosophy, using the phrase "British Commonwealth and Empire" continually in his references to UNRRA, the proposed world security organization and at Quebec in August 1943 in connection with his personal view for the regional organization of civil aviation. The only one who really shared the intensity of his vision was Lord Amery, who believed, again with an eye on the past, that the British Commonwealth should constitute its own region in all international organizations, in order "to give the world outside a new sense of England's power of vision and leadership."<sup>47</sup> As the minister responsible, Eden would have none of this brand of rhetoric, but he and his advisers in the Foreign Office often expressed the wish that the British Commonwealth should stand together in vital matters of international organization. Eden had used his "four-legged stool" metaphor when in Ottawa during the UNRRA stand-off in March 1943, arguing that a new world security organization should rest upon the four pillars of the United States, the Soviet Union, China and the British Commonwealth. Frank talk by Robertson, Wrong and Pearson at that time probably helped to change his mind, but a gradual shift of opinion within the Foreign Office was certainly more influential, as were the despatches of Malcolm MacDonald from Ottawa, one of which earlier in the year argued forcefully that recognition of the British

---

46. DEA, General Registry file 5842/40C, memorandum from Wrong to King, 11 November 1943; also analytical memorandum prepared by Leon Malania (a special assistant in DEA), 19 February 1944.

47. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U867/402/70, "Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India", 25 January 1943. Eden's minute of 10 February: "Mr. Amery's paper is a foolish production, by a kindly but confused old man."



Commonwealth as a great power would give each individual member something less than the status of full nationhood.<sup>48</sup>

The idea of a unitary British Commonwealth as a great power in international organizations had always been discouraged by Canada, since it was incompatible with functionalism and would do nothing to enhance Canada's burgeoning international status, but the concept did not readily fade away. Canadian feelings were all-pervasive, and their sensitivity was often not understood by the United Kingdom at all. For example, a preliminary agenda for a Commonwealth Relations Conference formulated by Chatham House in January 1944 was rejected by Canadian participants on the grounds that the agenda prejudged the issue of international recognition of the Dominions through the *inter se* doctrine and should have placed more emphasis on questions of concern to the entire international community. As it happened the British agenda had concentrated more on what was felt were issues of common interest, including how the British Commonwealth could be regarded as a great power, rather than on the establishment of an international system acceptable to all nations, and in developing the agenda, the members of the Royal Institute of International Affairs had simply not realized the depth of the Canadian point of view of the futility of discussing a unitary Commonwealth voice with four Dominions harbouring diverse interests. Edgar Tarr, the leading member of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs involved in both the preliminaries and the actual conference, summed up Canadian feelings in a letter to historian W.L. Morton:

Their (the Dominions) thinking and policies are nationally based, in the same way as those of the United States. The long Commonwealth association is one of the factors which helps to shape them, in just the same way that our close association with the United States, as well as with the Commonwealth, helps to shape our thinking and our policy.<sup>49</sup>

---

48. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U402/402/70, cable no. 178, MacDonald to Attlee, 23 January 1943. Eden's minute of 10 February: "I agree that the difficulties will be great with Canada, other Dominions and smaller powers. We can be sure that a hegemony of four powers one of which is China, will not be happily received." Also Pearson Diary, 14 & 31 March 1943.

49. Canadian Institute of International Affairs/Edgar Tarr Papers, vol. 1, file "1941/44", letter from E.J. Tarr to W.L. Morton, 4 September 1944; also memorandum by Tarr for Claxton, Robertson, Wrong, Keenleyside, and Louis Rasminsky, 30 December 1943.

The intellectual pyrotechnics at Chatham House, however, were relatively unimportant when compared to the storm which followed a speech by Lord Halifax to the Toronto Board of Trade on 24 January 1944 which urged that the "British Commonwealth and Empire" should become the fourth great power in an international organization "upon which, under Providence, the peace of the world will henceforth depend."<sup>50</sup> Had the speech been made at any other time and place, it probably would have aroused little attention, but Toronto with its strong British traditions, had always been a most politically sensitive city in which to give a speech on Commonwealth or imperial relations - one need only recall Arthur Meighen's politically disastrous "Ready, aye Ready" speech during the Chanak Crisis of 1922. With respect to timing, there had been other similar developments, disquieting to senior Canadian officials and particularly to the Prime Minister. Mackenzie King had always been suspicious of centralizing tendencies within the Commonwealth; amid the many despatches and memoranda which crossed his desk, his blunt pencil always seemed to be drawn to any phrase which so much as hinted at a unified Commonwealth foreign policy. The month of January 1944 gave him cause for special concern, since John Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia, had appealed for the establishment of a Commonwealth Council and a speech by Field Marshal Smuts had identified the British Commonwealth as one of the great powers. The Canadian Prime Minister was also nervous because the British had not yet indicated the specific nature of their proposals for the world security organization, and Churchill's comments about "family discussions" at the Quebec Conference the past August were undoubtedly still on his mind. Smelling an imperialistic plot, King was worried, but even so, the Halifax speech came as a surprise.<sup>51</sup> These things taken into consideration, it is understandable why Mackenzie King exploded and once again made election noises. On a more personal level, the Prime Minister resented the "tranquil con-

---

50. See Halifax, *The American Speeches of the Earl of Halifax* (London, 1947), pp. 275-283; also King Diary, 25 January 1944. The relevant extract from the diary is reprinted in Pickersgill, *The Mackenzie King Record* vol. 1, pp. 636-41.

51. King Diary, 25 January 1944.



sciousness of effortless superiority",<sup>52</sup> exhibited by Halifax and others, particularly their propensity to ignore the functional principle, which after all he himself had made public in Parliament. The question of a centralized Commonwealth foreign policy will be analyzed in greater detail in later chapters, but it is mentioned here as an issue which surfaced at an unwelcome time for Canada, confusing the picture which Canada was endeavouring to present, that of an independent nation willing and able to make its functional contribution to international organization.

Canada was in fact receiving indications from London of the state of British plans for the world organization; cables from the Dominions Office were regular, but as yet no complete plan had been received, although a seminal Foreign Office "United Nations Plan" had been in existence since January 1943. Also, in Ottawa, the existence of a relaxed relationship between Malcolm MacDonald and the Prime Minister, and his senior officials such as Robertson and Wrong, allowed for many informative discussions about policy in general, most of which the British High Commissioner reported to London. In the British capital, Charles Ritchie, by means of his "observer status" on the Post-Hostilities Problems Sub-Committee, was able to inform Ottawa of trends in policy, but not of an over-all scheme. Canada may have had a better idea of what to expect from the United Kingdom had a Prime Minister's Meeting been held during 1943, but Mackenzie King and his fellow prime ministers had demurred for various reasons.

As it was, Canada had not made any formal comments on future world organization since the question of adherence to the Moscow Declaration in December 1943, and although there had been some telegraphic traffic between London and Ottawa regarding the relationship between the League and the new organization, it was not until the United Kingdom indicated an imminent exchange of proposed agendas for discussion of draft plans for the world security organization with the United States on 20 March 1944 that Canada expressed any interest in a complete plan. Even then, the Canadian message was

---

52. This phrase comes from the King Diary of 30 July 1942 and was used at that time to describe Sir Frederick Leith-Ross of the Treasury. Throughout the war, King used variations of this phrase to describe various Englishmen, including Halifax.

innocuous: "We are not attempting to prepare a draft scheme of our own, but we should appreciate an opportunity of seeing your papers before they take final shape, if this is practicable."<sup>53</sup> One should remember that at this time the British were still absorbing the effects of Canada's draft convention on civil aviation. The Dominions Office was very meticulous about consultation, and did not oppose sending the United States a copy of the British agenda for the discussions but had drawn the line at sending a summary of British views on the world organization to the State Department before the Dominions had been consulted.<sup>54</sup> The Foreign Office, eager to press on, and realizing that its original "United Nations Plan" was already a year old, seemed prone to ignore this advice, terming consultation with the Dominions a "nuisance" which had to be endured "before we can formulate our own view."<sup>55</sup> However, the proposed bilateral discussions between the United Kingdom and the United States were postponed until the end of February and then once again until the Dumbarton Oaks conference in August, allowing both countries to consult informally and revise their respective plans accordingly. Discussions and consultations with the Dominions could therefore commence from May 1944 which was the time finally agreed upon by the prime ministers for their meeting in London.

Hume Wrong was correct in anticipating that at this conference Churchill was likely to advance to the prime ministers his notion of a world organization which would be directed by an executive council composed of the great powers representing certain regional bodies.

---

53. DEA, file 7-V(s), Wrong, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", with draft telegram attached, 29 March 1944.

54. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U1338/180/70, Godfrey Boyd-Shannon (Dominions Office) to Gladwyn Jebb (Foreign Office), 14 February 1944. The original plan, based upon four power superiority, was presented to the War Cabinet by Eden on 16 January 1943. CAB 66/33, W.P.(43)31, "Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs", 16 January 1943.

55. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U6615/402/70. This anonymous and undated minute was written on a copy of Canadian cable no. 147, King to Attlee, 13 September 1943, in connection with the proposed Canadian amendment to the Moscow Declaration discussed above. An interview with Lord Garner on 8 November 1979 confirmed that similar views existed among many Foreign Office officials until well after the establishment of the United Nations organization.



Representation on such a council, Wrong stated in a memorandum to Robertson, could best be accomplished through the application of the functional principle:

...It is not possible for one sovereign state to 'represent' other sovereign states on an international body except in rare instances by special arrangement. It is unrealistic and undesirable that all states without permanent seats should have the same chance of selection for a non-permanent seat no matter what their size or importance may be; it may prove desirable to relate frequency of service on the Council to the size of the contribution which would be based on capacity to pay and thus reflect the general importance of each state. It might be feasible to group states in categories of importance rather than by geographical areas although obviously distribution of non-permanent seats must be related to geography.<sup>56</sup>

Robertson was advised to urge the Prime Minister to encourage his peers to adopt a fairer system of distributing non-permanent seats than had been followed in the League Council, where incidentally, many states had been represented in spite of their failure to pay their allocated amounts of the League's budget. It is worthy of note that Wrong was far ahead of his colleagues in recognizing the geographical imperative as a debilitating factor as far as the application of functionalism was concerned, and they would react with more surprise than he at the election results to the Security Council of the First Assembly of the United Nations in 1946. Wrong's opinion was undoubtedly influenced by his own experience as Canadian representative to the League immediately before the war.

The well-drafted British proposals for a world security organization were circulated at a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers on 9 May, but were initially not discussed in any detail. Instead, attention focussed on a note in which Churchill outlined his idea of a regionally-based world organization consisting of a World Peace Council of the great powers, including the "British Commonwealth and Empire", which would in turn engender three regional councils: the Council of Asia, the Council of Europe, and the Council of the Americas, on which Canada would represent the British Commonwealth. In his proposals, the British Prime Minister also advocated a fraternal

---

56. Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 22, memorandum from Wrong to Robertson, "Representation of Smaller Countries on World Security Council", 25 April 1944.

association with the United States, eventually leading to common citizenship.<sup>57</sup> Mackenzie King did not have to rely on the advice of Robertson - his well-honed instincts told him that a scheme of this nature was unacceptable and he led his fellow prime ministers in convincing Churchill to swallow his pride and quickly withdraw his note, which he did. This was perhaps a larger triumph for Eden and the Foreign Office who had consistently opposed Churchill's views; Eden as early as March 1943 when Churchill had first suggested a "Council of Europe" in a radio broadcast.<sup>58</sup> In responding to the original Foreign Office plan, and with a wary eye still on Churchill, it is interesting to see that the Canadian Prime Minister cast his response within the framework of the functional principle and for the first time referred to Canada as a "middle power":

Canada, as a power of middle size, fully recognizes the necessity of ensuring that power and responsibility should correspond...Unless they (the smaller or middle powers) have the voice to which they are entitled by the contributions they can make to world security and prosperity, they cannot be expected to discharge their appropriate responsibilities.<sup>59</sup>

As if to demonstrate his point, Mackenzie King did not attend a meeting devoted to colonial questions, leaving Robertson to make the Canadian contribution which in itself was negligible. Unlike the other Dominions, Canada did not administer a mandated territory, nor did it wish to, and therefore possessed no functional interest in trusteeship. Moreover, it might prove too dangerous to support halfheartedly proposals which the Americans would reject.

---

57. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 323, copy of PMM(44)5 (Churchill's international organization plan), 8 May 1944. Churchill had mentioned the prospect of a regional council for Europe in a speech broadcast on 21 March 1943. DEA, General Registry file 4959-40C, despatch no. 80, Massey to King, 24 March 1943.

58. Pearson Diary, "Report of Mr. Anthony Eden to the War Committee of the Canadian Cabinet, March 31st, 1943."

59. DEA, file 7-V(s), Cabinet War Committee Document no. 924, "Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization; Views Expressed on Behalf of the Government of Canada, May 1944 to January 1945", document no. 1, "Extract from Statement made by Mr. Mackenzie King to the Meeting of Prime Ministers on May 11, 1944."



Norman Robertson, Charles Ritchie and John Holmes feverishly worked at analyzing the British proposals within the time limits imposed by the conference, since there was uncertainty when, or if, there would be another opportunity for the Prime Minister and his Under-Secretary to have such close direct contacts with British policy-makers again, either before Anglo-American bilateral discussions, or before a general conference. Basic general areas of Canadian policy had to be sketched out and informally imparted to the British - to be reformulated in detail through later communications from Ottawa - if the Canadians wished to have a chance of influencing the British plans before they were sent to the other great powers. The Prime Ministers' Meeting also included talks on Commonwealth consultation, the feasibility of Prime Minister Curtin's proposal for a Commonwealth Council, commercial relations, and some discussion of international civil aviation. The Canadian delegation, the smallest one at the conference, was certainly kept busy. For his part, Mackenzie King brought the gospel of functionalism and his contentment with the *status quo* of Commonwealth relations to the attention of British politicians in an address to both Houses of Parliament at Westminster. He appeared to have forgotten his singular lack of contentment occasioned by Lord Halifax's speech several months earlier. The Prime Minister also made sure to see as many of his aristocratic friends and acquaintances as he could, an activity in which he revelled whenever he was in London.

With regard to the British proposals for the international security organization, a difficulty arose when the covering note with which the Foreign Office had intended to preface the proposals was found not to be quite emphatic enough in expressing the rejection of the "regional councils" approach. At a meeting of officials presided over by Sir Alexander Cadogan, the Permanent Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, Robertson, supported by the New Zealanders, flatly refused to accept the covering note, arguing that the acceptance of such a regional scheme would encourage isolationism in the United States. In addition, Canada's diverse interests could not be satisfied by a regional system and Canada would be unwilling to represent the British Commonwealth in an American Council either. His hyperbole was effective, and the note was eventually amended. Robertson made a further intervention in stressing the importance of the right of a

state to be represented on the council of the proposed organization when the interests of that state were directly concerned. The original wording in the British plan on this point provided that "where the interests of any state are specially affected, it should have the right of representation on the Council," but this was changed prior to the meeting to read "should have the right to lay its case before the Council." Professor Charles Webster of the Foreign Office suggested that this was a mere drafting alteration, but the Canadians were not convinced.<sup>60</sup> It would become a major point in the evolution of Canadian policy toward the new organization.

Wrong took charge of further analysis of the United Kingdom proposals in the East Block following the Prime Ministers' Meeting. In an insightful memorandum of 19 June, he outlined selected areas of interest where "a Canadian view might exercise considerable influence", but also exhibited his pragmatism by correctly realizing that "the main outlines of the new organization will be agreed upon between the Great Powers and we shall have to accept their decisions." Wrong divided the subjects into two classes so as to include matters which were deliberately left out of the British paper for later agreement and issues arising directly from the proposals which would require the acceptance of the smaller powers. In the first category, Wrong placed the composition of the World Council and how non-permanent members should be chosen; the nature and powers of the Secretariat, especially the extent of the initiating powers of the Secretary-General; and the question of financial support of the organization, bearing in mind the time and trouble wasted on financial issues in the League. The second category commenced with the emphasis placed in the British paper on "sovereign equality"; how should the difference between "equality of status" and "equality of function" be realized? The powers of the Assembly were not clearly defined, those of the Council were. For the former, it was suggested that some attention be devoted to what should constitute its minimal powers; in the case of the latter a comparative study between its powers and those given to the League Council should be undertaken. A study of the pacific settlement

---

60. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "World Organization", memorandum by Charles Ritchie, "Future World Organization", minutes of meeting in the Foreign Office on 17 May 1944.



of disputes should wait, since it would prove more fruitful after the United States and the Soviet Union had indicated their preferences. Although the Working Committee on Post Hostilities Problems had already prepared a study on "Advantages and Disadvantages to Canada of the Regional Organization of Security and Defence", Wrong suggested that there should be some consideration given to measures to curb the influence of regional blocs - the elections at the Chicago civil aviation conference later in the year would prove him all too correct. Finally, he seized upon Robertson's significant intervention in London:

The question of representation on the Council, or at least of access to it, for states not members of it when their interests are specially affected is barely touched on. It is, however, very important for all states other than the great powers. How should this problem be met (a) in the case of the states involved in a dispute before the Council and (b) in the case of states whose interests are specially affected in policies before the Council?<sup>61</sup>

At a meeting in Norman Robertson's office the next day, the decision was made to circulate the British proposals to the various divisions within the Department of External Affairs and to the embassy in Washington for comment and analysis. Detailed studies were not undertaken by the Economic Division, but its head, Henry Angus, believed that the shortcomings of the British plan lay in the fact that it offered smaller nations practically no security against interferences in their interests, commercial or strategic, by the great powers.<sup>62</sup> The other divisions did not issue complete studies either, being plagued by other concerns, although a few short memoranda were written. The Legal Division for example undertook the process of examining how international law would be regarded in the new organization, and whether the existing Permanent Court of International Justice would be revised or abolished, and replaced with a new court.

As a result, it was chiefly Hume Wrong, knowing the subject better than anyone else, with the assistance of John Holmes and later George Ignatieff, who contributed the preliminary analyses. Wrong

---

61. DEA, file 7-V(s), memorandum by Wrong, "Notes on Paper PNM (44)4 of 8 May 1944, 'Future World Organisation'", 19 June 1944.

62. *Ibid.*, memorandum from H.F. Angus to Wrong, "Plans for Future World Organization", 23 June 1944; also interview with Charles Ritchie, 20 June 1980.

was in the position, as Associate Under-Secretary of State, effectively to gauge the governing political realities, and by this time functioned in concert with Robertson to the point where either man could be found in the other's office at any time. Holmes was well-placed as Secretary to the Working Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems, and although that committee was more concerned with post-military plans for Europe during this period, Holmes received a valuable overview of the opinions of other departments, and through Ritchie in London, of the British planners such as Gladwyn Jebb and Professor Charles Webster. When Holmes was posted to Canada House in late 1944, his position in Ottawa was filled by George Ignatieff who had returned from the same place. The wisdom of this shift of personnel for the betterment of consultation both in London and Ottawa is obvious. Holmes ventured an early memorandum on what would later in his career become one of his passions - the Assembly. He believed that, as in 1919, the planners had neglected the function of the Assembly and thought it doubtful that any Assembly would remain content to be a debating body unless its debates led to resolutions and the resolutions to action. Since Canada was one of those nations whose representation on the Council would probably at best be infrequent, it should be interested in urging more extensive powers for the Assembly.<sup>63</sup>

Pearson's response, written with Escott Reid, came from Washington a month after the meeting in Robertson's office. Pearson felt that the Foreign Office paper would serve as a useful basis for the discussions between the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and China. Two of the most important features of any discussion, he believed, would be the powers and responsibilities given to the World Council and the position and obligations of the lesser powers in the organization. Pearson emphasized that the success of any organization would be conditional on the ability of the three great powers to desire to work together for peace - he refused to acknowledge China's place within the inner circle. Agreeing with his colleagues in Ottawa that the Assembly should be "something more than a futile

---

63. DEA, file 7-V(s), memorandum by John Holmes, "The Functions of a World Assembly", 13 July 1944.



debating society", and that it was necessary to have a relationship between power and responsibility in the organization, Pearson underscored the prevalent Canadian opinion on what was perceived to be the crucial issue: "I do not see how the intermediate or smaller powers could ever whole-heartedly, or even half-heartedly, support any World Council if, when their specific interests are being discussed by such a Council, or when specific obligations are being imposed on them, all they can do is lay their case before the Council."<sup>64</sup> The only way for the organization to succeed would be if the advantages of membership outweighed the disadvantages. This would be the case if nations acquired the right to participate functionally in decisions which affected their interests.

The American proposals arrived via the Dominions Office on 25 July. Unfortunately, there was insufficient time to study them in detail and to present the British with a reply to their plan before the tripartite - China was excluded from the first round - Dumbarton Oaks discussions began in Washington on 21 August. The Canadian reply to the British, intended to amplify rather than criticize, was despatched on 2 August and expressed satisfaction that there seemed to be so much common ground between the United States' and United Kingdom's proposals. It raised all the issues which had been analyzed over the past month, and added that Canada also supported the American proposal for the creation of an Economic and Social Council. Predictably, most of the emphasis of the cable was on the powers and functions of the World Council:

We are concerned over the very extensive powers proposed for the Council in both the United Kingdom and United States plans, and we feel that the requirement of unanimity among the permanent members should be narrowly defined... The greater the authority of the Council the more important it is that states not represented on it should have the right of effective participation when matters closely touching their interests are under discussion... We doubt whether many states without permanent Council seats would be ready to join an organization in which the Council's decisions on grave issues, involving action on their part, would be binding on them.<sup>65</sup>

---

64. DEA, file 6-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 18 July 1944.

65. *Ibid.*, Cabinet War Committee Document no. 924, "Views Expressed by the Government of Canada, May 1944 to January 1945", cable no 130, King to Cranborne, 2 August 1944.

During the Dumbarton Oaks discussions in Washington, Canada was probably better placed than any of the non-participating powers to receive information of the proceedings and to make comments through the British delegation. The United Kingdom was both generous and thorough in providing the Dominions' representatives with copies of the telegrams which Cadogan sent to London. There were daily meetings at the British embassy where the Dominions were briefed on events and encouraged to air their concerns. During the 1930s and 1940s, as Commonwealth consultation had matured to the point where there was virtually a continuous flow of information from the Dominions Office regarding the international activities of the United Kingdom, and some in return from the Dominions themselves, a tradition had been established for consultation, and Dumbarton Oaks was no exception. Since there already were Dominion representatives resident in Washington, and with leading British policy-makers in attendance at the conference, it seemed only too logical to avoid the usual cumbersome and time-consuming - and for the Foreign Office often frustrating - process of consultation, although the Dominions Office was used by Ottawa during the conference as before. The discussions at Dumbarton Oaks were probably the last and best example of the "white man's Commonwealth" in consultation, and it was indeed ironic that the Dominions, Canada in particular, who wished to pursue an independent course in international relations, should give the impression of being so dependent on the United Kingdom as to require constant information and reassurance. To external eyes, the myth of a uniform Commonwealth policy was reinforced at Dumbarton Oaks; it would be quickly shattered at the San Francisco conference the following year.

Where the Canadians had an advantage over other Dominion representatives was in the close personal contacts enjoyed by Lester Pearson and Escott Reid with James 'Scotty' Reston of the *New York Times*. Reston was the recipient of several judicious leaks and was attuned to the mood of the American delegation, which gave the Canadians a clearer indication of the problems the State Department had



to face.<sup>66</sup>

The meetings between the great powers at Dumbarton Oaks were characterized by the efforts of the Americans and the British both to placate and to soothe the Soviets, whether in the Soviet proposal for an international air force, their desire for a four power Council, their wish for unanimity through strong veto powers for the permanent members of the Council, or a restricted Assembly. The potentially explosive issue of separate representation for the sixteen constituent republics of the Soviet Union was also raised, but apparently as a rejoinder to the American *volte-face* on the issue of great powers being able to vote on the Council when parties to a dispute. American interests for more seats on the Council, including a permanent seat for Brazil, had to be reconciled with the British preference for four permanent and six non-permanent members, plus a "vacant chair" for France.<sup>67</sup>

Pearson availed himself of every opportunity to press the Canadian case to the British along familiar lines. On the issue of voting privileges, which Wrong had not analyzed earlier because of a lack of any coherent great power position, Pearson told the British in high moral tones that a party to a dispute should never be permitted to vote, either in the assumption of jurisdiction over the dispute or in settlement matters; that there should be defined limits to the great power veto in the Council; and that there should be no veto power by a state in the Assembly or in the Economic and Social Council.<sup>68</sup> Evi-

---

66. For example, Reston told Reid that Cordell Hull had shown the Senate Foreign Relations Committee the United States proposals, went over them with the senators paragraph by paragraph, and still could not manage to secure the endorsement of the Committee. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 368, Pearson to Robertson, 6 October 1944. The entire Dumbarton Oaks Charter was also leaked to Reston and speculation has it that this was done by the Chinese who were irked at not being included in the first round of discussions. Interview with Escott Reid, 12 June 1980.

67. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U7322/180/70, Cranborne to King, 12 September 1944; also King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 364, cable WA4987, Pearson to King, 25 August 1944; and cable WA5062, Pearson to King, 30 August 1944.

68. FO 371 Series, U7604/180/70, Minutes of meeting between Gladwyn Jebb, Stephen Holmes, and Washington Representatives of the Dominions and India, 14 September 1944; also King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 364, cable WA5156, Pearson to Robertson, 2 September 1944.

dent in the Canadian mind was the fear that with all these veto powers, the great powers would have too much strength, including the right to veto any action taken against themselves as parties to a dispute. Alas, the Soviet position was diametrically opposed to that of the Canadians; the British and the Americans were rather more interested in reaching an accommodation with the Soviets. When this proved impossible, the question of voting was referred for further discussion among the great powers and was not included in the published Dumbarton Oaks proposals.

At one of the last meetings between the United Kingdom and the Dominions at the British embassy, Cadogan expressed obvious satisfaction at what the British delegation had been able to accomplish during the discussions, including among other things, a statement by principles which would restrain arbitrary action by the Council, thereby protecting the smaller nations; the expansion of membership on the Council; and the securing of participation on the Council for states parties to a dispute whose interests at been specially affected.<sup>69</sup> It was a considerable diplomatic triumph for the United Kingdom, and by association for Canada as well. Pearson, who had become something of a zealot in voicing his concern over the recognition of the rights of the secondary or middle powers, was sorely disappointed by the British failure to secure acceptance of the "due regard" clause, which stipulated that there should be acknowledgement of powers according to past and potential contribution, the inclusion of which in the final document would have been a visible manifestation of functionalism.

Although Wrong and Robertson were not at the conference, they had more realistic notions about what was politically feasible, including the danger of expressing Canadian concerns too vocally so as to appear to interfere in American affairs at a time when the Republican presidential nominee, Thomas Dewey, was assailing the concept

---

69. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 364, cable WA5614, McCarthy to King, 28 September 1944; also FO 371 Series, U7353/180/70, Cadogan to Foreign Office, 12 September 1944; and U7794/180/70, note regarding meeting at Washington embassy between the United Kingdom and the Dominions, 12 September 1944.



of four power leadership.<sup>70</sup> For instance, Wrong and Robertson were prepared to change their views regarding the desirability of an international police force under the control of the world organization. By the middle of the Dumbarton Oaks meetings, when there was much disagreement between the English-speaking great powers and the Soviet Union on several issues, only Pearson clung convincingly to this belief and used it as a vehicle to further the concept that states providing military forces should have the right to participate in Council decisions regarding their deployment. In Ottawa, Wrong and Robertson were more practical, dropping the police force concept, but retaining the notion that states should participate in Council decisions if their forces were required. They knew that there was a price to be paid for Soviet agreement and that parliament, public opinion and Mackenzie King, in spite of his conversion from isolationism to functionalism, would never accept decisions made regarding Canadian forces without an appropriate Canadian contribution to the decision-making process. In the United States, there would be similar difficulties with Congressional sanction, although it was felt by the Canadians that as far as the Americans were concerned, it would be a case of "straining at a gnat when the chief secondary states may be asked to swallow a camel."<sup>71</sup>

The above remark is symptomatic of an overly glib attitude which Canadian officials had about American difficulties, *tête-à-têtes* with Scotty Reston notwithstanding. The Canadians had relied on the British as informants and interlocutors to the point of exclusivity, not that the State Department, with its senatorial and Pan-American concerns, would have had the time or the patience to be to be as forthcoming as a busy Foreign Office. Pearson and Reid did engage in conversation with several State Department officials, most

---

70. King Papers, J1 Series, vo. 369, Norman Robertson to Merchant Mahoney (of the Canadian Embassy, Washington), 18 August 1944.

71. *Ibid.*, cable EX3733, Robertson and Wrong to Pearson, 6 September 1944. The dialogue in Ottawa had also been influenced by important voices urging moderation. Graham Towers, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, wrote: "It seems to me that iron-ribbed commitments to participate in a war might produce less satisfactory results than a looser form of arrangement." DEA, file 7-V(s), Towers to Wrong, 3 November 1944.

notably John Hickerson, the head of the British Commonwealth Division, but their views were perceived as individual opinions and not those of the Canadian Government. After the Dumbarton Oaks conference, Pearson believed that Canada had a chance to influence American outlooks and that this should be accomplished before the general conference which would include all allied nations. Predictably, Pearson recommended that any representations to the United States should emphasize "the necessity of narrowing the gap between the rights and obligations of the great and lesser powers."<sup>72</sup> As it happened, Mackenzie King and Roosevelt did have a summit meeting during the autumn, but this was not the place to bring forward detailed minutiae on the plans for the world organization. Consultation at the official level was not established until January 1945, and then there were disappointments.

Instead, the Canadians continued to consult very directly with the British. In Ottawa, an informal October conversation between Malcolm MacDonald and Norman Robertson, Hume Wrong and Arnold Heeney, expanded on an earlier cable from Mackenzie King to Churchill which had stressed the need to secure the association of the secondary states to the organization through the application of the functional principle. A military alliance between the "Big Three" should be required during a "transitional period", and the publication of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, which appeared imminent, should be delayed, if not suppressed. This latter suggestion was ostensibly to allow more time for consultation, but the Canadian Prime Minister's own personal view - that the proposals would not be well received by French Canada and the CCF - crept through.<sup>73</sup>

---

72. DEA, file 7-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 12 October 1944. Escott Reid received information on Soviet views from conversations with Charles Bohlen. "Memorandum by Mr. Reid of a Conversation with Mr. Bohlen, Chief of the Eastern European Division of the State Department", 20 October 1944.

73. Dominions Office, DO 35/1870, J.S.S. Garner (High Commission, Ottawa) to Godfrey Boyd-Shannon (Dominions Office), 7 October 1944. An unsigned minute on this letter exclaimed: "This is one of the most remarkable examples of muddled thinking I ever came across. At one moment, Messrs. N. Robertson and Hume Wrong are complaining of the inadequate considerations given to secondary states; at the next they are advocating a military alliance of the 4 Great Powers; at a third they say they are not perturbed about the Russian veto; and they then end up by declaring that they are gravely preoccupied about the prospects of setting up a successful world organization. Finally they are proved wrong about the attitude of Canadian public opinion to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. No wonder we get some very odd communications from Canada!"



His fears were unfounded. The polls of the Wartime Information Board consistently showed strong support across the nation for the international policies of the government, although there was less enthusiasm in Quebec, and by March 1945, 72% of Canadians desired their country to take an active role in maintaining world peace, even at the cost of sending Canadian forces overseas to enforce international decisions.<sup>74</sup> There had been talk during the Dumbarton Oaks discussions of locating the headquarters of the new organization in Quebec, and the city of Levis formally went on record in support. This idea was not new - there had been remarks in this vein during the first Quebec conference in August 1943 and Professor Arnold Toynbee of the Foreign Office Research Department had suggested southern Ontario as a location earlier in the year.<sup>75</sup>

Activity within the Department of External Affairs during December 1944 was centred on producing an adequate reply to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals for transmission to the "Big Four" and the provisional French Government, which would get Canadian recommendations across and still allow Parliament to ratify the proposed Charter without appearing to make the government look inconsistent if its suggestions were not accepted. In addition to stressing the expected argument for due recognition of secondary states, mentioning that Canada had demonstrated its military and industrial capacity and readiness to join in concerted action against aggression in two world wars, the Canadian reply also launched a new proposal. A suggestion was made that decisions of the Council under Chapter VIIIB - military enforcement - should only bind states represented on the Council; those that were not represented would participate in military action following endorsement by a two-thirds majority in the Assembly, or if the nations concerned had been invited to share in the deliberations

---

74. There was however less enthusiasm in Quebec, although this particular record does not indicate how much less. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 427, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, document no. 966, Wartime Information Board Survey no. 59, 24 March 1945.

75. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, memorandum from James A. Gibson to King, 28 November 1944. Toynbee's preference is indicated in Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2207/402/70, minute on draft of "United Nations Plan", n.d. (Spring 1943).

of the Council.<sup>76</sup> After dealing at such length with the platitudinous generalities of representation of lesser powers without presenting workable proposals in this regard, Canada had made an initiative which seemed practicable, at least to Canada.

At the end of 1944, there was every reason for optimism over the impending developments toward an effective world organization. Escott Reid, the utopian of the Department of External Affairs, preferred a complete Canadian draft Charter as an alternative to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. Fresh from the tribulations of civil aviation at Chicago, he expressed his enthusiasm for the coming year in a telegram to Norman Robertson:

In Chicago I got into the habit of drafting dozens of Convention Articles overnight. I have not yet been able wholly to break myself out of that bad habit, to which I have lately been succumbing between the hours of eight in the evening and midnight. Consequently I am sending you by bag on Saturday, as a Christmas present, a redraft of the Charter and in my redraft have incorporated 75 per cent to 90 per cent of the Constitutional Articles of the Permanent Aviation Convention.<sup>77</sup>

Although the vigour of Reid's sense of mission was not always shared within the Department, there did exist a quiet sort of optimism. Canada had acquired a favourable amount of prestige as a result of wise mediation at the Chicago conference on international civil aviation, and an international aviation authority had been established which would meet Canadian requirements. On a broader level, there had been success on basic Canadian tenets of international organization: representation according to regional councils had been effectively discouraged, as had the idea of a unitary Commonwealth policy. Commonwealth consultation had been more than adequate, and had resulted in a greater Canadian input into the Dumbarton Oaks proposals than might otherwise have been possible. Functionalism had matured, and its application had become more sophisticated; which is to say, it was realized that not everyone viewed it as a panacea, and that it could not be applied equally to every situation.

---

76. DEA, file 7-V(s), Wrong, "Draft Memorandum on Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for communication to United States, United Kingdom, Soviet, Chinese and French Governments", 30 December 1944. The message was sent on 12 January 1945.

77. *Ibid.*, cable WA7095, Reid to Robertson, 21 December 1944.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE UNITED NATIONS

You've come from nations far and near  
To meet each other in person here  
To discuss worldly problems pro and con,<sup>1</sup>  
Have a better understanding from now on.

The founding conference of the United Nations at San Francisco in 1945 was an event unparalleled before its time. Attracting over 2000 delegates, advisers and staff from 46 nations, and through radio people in all parts of the globe, it symbolized the hopes of all for order in an imperfect world. To Canada, the resultant Charter of the United Nations represented "a beginning and not an end. It has in it the seeds of progress and development, and it can be changed as the changes are required."<sup>2</sup> Canada played a quiet and effective role at the conference in advancing its own particular concerns while realizing

- 
1. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 339, file 3672, included in letter from William Christians, a citizen of San Francisco, to King, 25 April 1945.
  2. Pearson Papers, vol. 20, file "Speeches - San Francisco 1945", speech broadcast in the United States, 1 July 1945.

that success could only be achieved without major disagreements between the great powers. The Canadian attitude was characterized by a greater sense of realism, acquired through frustrating discussions with the United States earlier in the year concerning the world security organization, and through continued consultations with the British which led to pre-conference Commonwealth talks in London in April. Although the functional principle was enshrined in the Charter at San Francisco, there was uncertainty whether it would be accepted by all members in practice, though universal acceptability was not, it is true, an overriding concern at the time. In a broadcast to the nation on Dominion Day 1945 from San Francisco, it was an exuberant Lester Pearson who declared: "If the Canada of 1945 is eager and anxious to play an important role in world affairs, it is not I hope, because of any delusions of grandeur, or of overweening ambition. It is because she has acquired an intelligent understanding of her own enlightened self-interest."<sup>3</sup> Canadian optimism became more hesitant following the conference, as it became clear that nations were indeed prone to "overweening ambitions" in the new organization. In spite of several setbacks to Canadian prestige in the early stages of the United Nations and the spectre of dangerous disunity among the great powers, there proved to be a resolve to stand by the troubled organization, come what may. It was during and following the initiating conference of the United Nations that a greater sense of realism began to pervade Canadian foreign policy, and it was also then that Canada began to act like the middle power it was becoming.

\* \* \*

The United Kingdom, United States, Soviet Union, China and the Provisional French Government were sent the official Canadian response to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals for the world security organization on 12 January 1945. As indicated in the last chapter, this memorandum endorsed the functional principle, which probably came as no surprise to the great powers, and also embodied an initiative under the enforcement chapter of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, suggesting Assembly approval for military commitments on the

---

3. Pearson Papers, vol. 20, file "Speeches - San Francisco 1945", speech, "Canada in World Affairs", broadcast over the CBC from San Francisco to Canada, 1 July 1945.



part of states not represented on the Council. But the memorandum reflected no real sense of urgency, the prevalent impression in the East Block being "that the desired changes can most effectively be introduced before the proposals are formally submitted as the basis for an international conference."<sup>4</sup> Similarly, instructions to the Canadian heads of mission in the five capitals stated that "the memorandum deliberately avoids proposing specific amendments because there are alternative means of meeting most of the points."<sup>5</sup> The representatives however were reminded to stress what lay behind the sole initiative of the memorandum: the right of all states to participate in decisions involving the deployment of their own military forces. For the rest, there appeared to be justifiable confidence in the ability of Canadian diplomacy to get the job done quietly.

The publication of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals raised the important question of publicity in Canada. Mackenzie King and his Liberals were planning an election in 1945, and public interest in the international policies of the government was a concern. Following a statement by the Prime Minister to the House of Commons on the Dumbarton Oaks proposals of 9 October 1944, the Wartime Information Board produced a descriptive pamphlet of which more than 40,000 copies were distributed. Educational aid kits were sent to schools and church groups across the country. In January 1945, Norman Robertson, himself not usually associated with questions of publicity, went so far as to suggest to the Prime Minister that John Grierson, the talented director of the National Film Board, should offer his services to the State Department in order to make a popular film of the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals.<sup>6</sup> Speeches were also made by Cabinet ministers and

---

4. DEA, file 7-V(s), Cabinet War Committee Document No. 924, "Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization; Views Expressed on Behalf of the Government of Canada, May 1944 to January 1945", "Memorandum to the Governments of the United States, United Kingdom, Soviet Union and China and the Provisional Government of the French Republic", 12 January 1945.

5. *Ibid.*, cable from the Secretary of State for External Affairs to the High Commissioner, London, the Ambassadors in Washington, Moscow and Paris and the Charge d'Affaires, Chungking, 12 January 1945.

6. DEA, file 5475-40, memorandum from Robertson to King, 26 January 1945.

senior Canadian diplomats, extolling the virtues of the proposals, while also mentioning Canada's special interests.<sup>7</sup> In response it could not be said that Canadians were unenthusiastic. A Gallup poll of January 1945 demonstrated that 90% of Canadians surveyed approved of membership in a world security organization and 76% believed in the use of military sanctions, although in the province of Quebec this figure dropped to 51%.<sup>8</sup> This poll result appeared to obviate repeatedly voiced fears of Canadian officials during the previous year and in the months that would come about harsh public verdicts on commitments for Canada.

In the diplomatic corridors, Escott Reid pursued publicity on a different level. When his masters within the Department of External Affairs refused to get excited about publishing a Canadian draft charter as an alternative to the Dumbarton Oaks proposals just before the general conference, Reid decided to take matters into his own hands. His version was published under a pseudonym in an American journal just before the San Francisco Conference, his assumption being that if this approach worked once for civil aviation, it might be worth a chance in the case of the general organization.<sup>9</sup>

---

7. A speech which had been delivered by Pearson in Winnipeg surprisingly appeared in Paris in the February 1945 issue of "Bulletin de Documentation", published by the Agence France-Presse under the title of "Le point du vue d'un Canadien sur les projets du Dumbarton Oaks", DEA, file 5475-40, Wrong to Pearson, 22 February 1945.

8. DEA, file 5475-40, memorandum from Robertson to King, 26 January 1945.

9. DEA, file 7-V(s), Reid to Robertson, 24 January 1945. Reid's charter was eventually published without departmental approval in the magazine *Free World*. Reid believed that because his charter contained clear, stirring language and contained numerous references to American history, people would not guess who had written it. They did. DEA, Papers of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 827, file 732, Reid to Robertson, 21 March 1945. Reid had earlier apologized to Robertson: "So far as I know there is nothing in it which is contrary to the views of the Canadian Government, though not everything in it, of course, represents Canadian Government views. As I have said to you, what I have tried to do is write the best possible treaty which could be written on the basis of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. I wish it were possible to do more because, as you said, there isn't much straw in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals out of which to build bricks." Reid to Robertson, 13 March 1945.



Optimism at Canadian abilities to influence the great power proposals became more guarded once direct consultation was taken up with the United States State Department in January 1945. Ray Atherton, the American ambassador in Ottawa, informed Hume Wrong on 4 January that Canada would be furnished with complete information about a forthcoming meeting of the American republics at Chapultepec, Mexico, called to discuss the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. He took pains to emphasize to Wrong that Canada possessed a marked advantage over other countries in its close liaison with the United Kingdom. Wrong in turn stated that in spite of Canadian difficulties with the proposals, nothing was being said in Canada which would make acceptance more difficult in the United States. The United States was not taking Canadian views seriously enough, Wrong observed, and offered a scenario which even he must have found difficult to believe: "I pointed out that criticism in Canada of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals would be picked up by the isolationists in the United States and might become - especially if injected into the Canadian election - a factor of some account in the consideration by the Senate of the Charter of the new organization."<sup>10</sup> Atherton admitted his government's guilt, but Wrong did not reciprocate by admitting that his government benefitted from the informative British connection.

In Washington, while listening to Edward Stettinius, Cordell Hull's successor as Secretary of State, wax eloquent about the exemplary nature of Canadian-American relations, Pearson took the opportunity to remind the Secretary that the Canadian approach to the international organization could naturally be not quite the same as that of a great power. Not wishing to go too far since on this occasion he was presenting his newly-acquired ambassadorial credentials, Pearson nevertheless told Stettinius that the Dumbarton Oaks Charter "...should recognize the place of the Middle Powers and make it possible for public opinion in those powers whole-heartedly to support the United Nations Organization."<sup>11</sup> Privately, some American officials

---

10. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 342, file 3679, memorandum from Wrong to King, 4 January 1945.

11. Stettinius responded by saying: "You people in Canada really have nothing to worry about in these things; you are in a sense part of us and you are also part of the British Empire. You are really fortunate because you have such good and strong friends." Since this was his first formal meeting with the Secretary, Pearson did not put up his usual fight. DEA file 7-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 9 January 1945.

admitted that they did not think that the Charter as drafted would have much of a chance of getting through the Canadian parliament, to say nothing of the American Senate.<sup>12</sup> No one seemed to place much faith in public opinion polls.

The State Department took the Canadians by surprise by requesting their views before the Canadian memorandum of 12 January arrived. On the day before, Pearson met with Theodore Achilles, the new head of the British Commonwealth Division, who handled him a list of specific points on which the State Department wished to solicit Canadian views. The Americans invited Canadian comment on the questions of initial membership in the organization, the role of the proposed Economic and Social Council, the procedure for preparing the statute of an international court, and the character of provisions relating to "peaceful change", or the power of the organization to revise treaties, boundaries and the like. "Peaceful change" had been embodied in Article XIX of the League Covenant, but had never been used and it was felt by Canada that this provision would lead some of the smaller powers to demand the inclusion of a territorial guarantee along the lines of Article X of the League Covenant, which Canada had consistently opposed.<sup>13</sup> As it was, Canada did not really have to take a stand on the question of a territorial guarantee since the United States opposed it when raised at the San Francisco conference, opting instead for a statement of general acceptance of the sovereign integrity of states. For the moment, Pearson gave perfunctory replies to the American queries, which would be studied in detail by Wrong and his small but potent task force in Ottawa.

Pearson, apprehensive at tendencies of the isolationists in the American Senate to defend the rights of the smaller powers, suggested to Ottawa that the Canadian memorandum be circulated to a wider group of smaller powers in order to secure some more support. This request was rejected by Wrong, who believed that the great powers

---

12. Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 7, "Dumbarton Oaks Draft Charter", memorandum by Reid following dinner with John Hickerson of the State Department, 10 January 1945.

13. DEA, file 7-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 11 January 1945; also draft memorandum by Charles Ritchie and Hume Wrong, "Points Raised by the State Department Concerning the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals", 29 January 1945.



should make the desired changes in the proposals, and if they did not, it would be best if the exact nature of the Canadian representations were known only to a narrow circle.<sup>14</sup> The Foreign Minister of Belgium, Paul-Henri Spaak, and E.R. Van Kleffens, the Dutch Foreign Minister, were given the memorandum but at a later date. Van Kleffens in particular could have been taken more into Canadian confidence, since in his speeches he repeatedly emphasized that distinctions had to be drawn between middle and smaller powers, continuously using Canada as an example.<sup>15</sup> In retrospect the Canadian proclivity not to cultivate allies for the middle power cause was perhaps comfortably unwise, and reflected Canadian uncertainties with public opinion. It should be said, however, that there were few powers which would fit the "middle power" category.

The fateful meeting with American officials took place in Washington on 12 February. Wrong was accompanied by Pearson, Heeney, Reid, and Davidson Dunton, the Manager of the Wartime Information Board, who also managed to have some talks with leading American journalist Walter Lippmann. The meeting itself was principally a dialogue between Hume Wrong and Leo Pasvolsky, the architect of the American plans for the world organization. The Canadians did not perceive the American attitude as encouraging:

The United States representatives gave the impression that, while they were glad to listen to our comments, they were so engrossed with their own particular difficulties and with the difficulties of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union that they were unwilling and unable to attach much importance to our difficulties or our views.<sup>16</sup>

The most significant outcome of the talks, Wrong informed the Prime Minister, was the knowledge that the State Department had decided, chiefly at the public urgings of Senator Arthur Vandenberg, to separate the machinery for the enforcement of peace treaties with Germany and Japan from the proposed general security organization. Wrong be-

---

14. DEA, file 7-V(s), Pearson to Wrong, 16 January 1945; also cable EX229, Wrong to Pearson, 19 January 1945.

15. *Ibid.*, Holmes to Wrong, 24 January 1945.

16. *Ibid.*, memorandum by Reid, "General International Organization; Memorandum of a discussion held in Mr. Pasvolsky's Office in the State Department, Washington", 12 February 1945.

lieved that if this were the case, emphasis on the Security Council within the organization would be reduced and the importance of the Assembly and the proposed Economic and Social Council enhanced. The Council would become less important and this would be good for public opinion in Canada. On the other hand, the Canadian memorandum of 12 January had not been considered very seriously, and Pasvolsky balked at accepting the Canadian proposal that Council decisions regarding military enforcement should only bind states represented on the Council unless there was an endorsement by two-thirds of the Assembly. The Americans preferred a scheme where a state not a member of the Council would not be bound until its government had concurred in the decision, Pasvolsky arguing that such a scheme would be more sensible. With regard to Canadian insistence on the recognition of the functional principle in the election of states to the Council, "the Americans produced the obvious and formidable objections to any effort to classify all the states of the world in accordance with their international significance."<sup>17</sup> Pasvolsky stated that if criteria for election were required, they would have to include the contribution of armed forces, the necessity of proper regional representation and the "moral leadership" of states.<sup>18</sup> Functionalism was a dead issue as far as the Americans were concerned, and Canadian officials were so blinded by the logic of the functional principle that they actually believed that the United States could be swayed from the anti-functionalist stand it had taken in the membership issue of UNRRA and at Dumbarton Oaks.

The Canadian memorandum was not better received in London, where the Foreign Office view appeared to be that greater success for modifications of the Charter could only be achieved if the great powers reached a decision among themselves and then presented this to the general conference. John Holmes, who had by this time succeeded

---

17. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "World Organization; Wrong, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 15 February 1945; also DEA, General Registry file 5475-40, despatch no. 415, Pearson to King, 16 February 1945.

18. DEA, file 7-V(s), Reid, "General International Organization: Memorandum of a discussion at Blair House, Washington, 10 February 1945."



Charles Ritchie at Canada House, had frequent occasion to meet with Gladwyn Jebb of the Foreign Office, and although the latter expressed sympathy for Canadian feelings, especially the issue of more proper representation for the middle powers, his attitude hardened when it came to the specific Canadian proposal: "He appreciated our problems and realized the difficulties we faced, but he was frankly worried about any provisions which would cause delay in the enforcement of sanctions."<sup>19</sup> The Canadian initiative had been quickly dismissed by the two great powers it was supposed to influence. The cool attitude of the great powers to the Canadian recommendation had not been unexpected, but disappointment in the East Block was eased by what in retrospect seemed an unrealistic notion that there would be sufficient time to offer some acceptable alternatives to the great powers before the general conference.

In the Department of External Affairs, an indefatigable Hume Wrong was undeterred. In spite of American wishes to stage the general conference at San Francisco in March 1945, Wrong sensed that it would be at least late April or May before it would convene. Analysis of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals continued, and papers dealing with the role of the great powers, the Economic and Social Council, legal questions, and military aspects were produced and discussed among officials. Insofar as military questions were concerned, Wrong's view that the use of force should be determined by circumstances and not by any rigid scheme, was closer to the temper of the Prime Minister than the opinions expressed by several other members of the Department of External Affairs. Wrong noted that under the Dumbarton Oaks proposals, no general obligation to furnish forces at the behest of the Security Council was contemplated and members of the organization would only be obligated by being direct parties to special agreements. In contrast to the League Covenant, disarmament received only a passing glance in the proposals where it was referred to as "regulation".<sup>20</sup> The issue would not attract more attention at San Fran-

---

19. King Papers, J1 Series, vo. 387, copy of memorandum from Holmes to Massey, 27 January 1945; interview with John Holmes, 23 July 1980.

20. DEA, file 7-V(s), memorandum by Wrong, "Military Aspects of the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals", 19 February 1945; see also John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace* vol. 1, p. 243.

cisco, planners in all countries being unaware that the birth of the atomic age was only a few months away.

In light of the voting agreement reached by the "Big Three" at their conference at Yalta from 4 to 11 February 1945, which ensured the great power veto on almost everything, and on which there had been no British consultation with the Dominions, it appeared that no system could be devised which would have sufficient strength to coerce nations as powerful as the United States, the United Kingdom or the Soviet Union. Wrong was of this opinion, but in Washington, Pearson and Reid, stronger believers in collective security than Wrong, were not, as Pearson readily informed Robertson:

I can recognize that certain immediate political considerations in certain countries make it necessary to take this line, but I see no reason why we should encourage it in Canada; especially as it is a completely defeatist line and represents a considerable retrogression from the League Covenant. Notwithstanding the State Department here goes merrily along trying to convince people that the Dumbarton Charter is much better than the old League Covenant because it has teeth in it. What is the use of having teeth if you cannot use them? What the Dumbarton Oaks Charter needs in fact is a little dentistry.<sup>21</sup>

- 
21. DEA, file 7-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 14 March 1945. Reid offered the historical argument: "Surely, indeed, the lesson to be drawn from the history of the Thirties is that if a great power should, in future, act in such a way as to convince the other great powers that it is determined to dominate the world by force, the only way to prevent a world war from breaking out will be for the other great powers to form immediately an alliance against it and to declare that the moment it commences aggression they will in combination wage total war against it until it surrenders unconditionally." Reid would become one of the key figures in the discussions leading up to NATO in a few years' time. Reid, "Comments on memorandum of March 6 to the Prime Minister outlining material which might be included in his speech moving the resolution on international organization in the House of Commons", 14 March 1945. Walter Riddell, who had achieved notoriety for being publicly repudiated by Mackenzie King when the former proposed oil sanctions against Italy under the League in 1935, and who had since been exiled as High Commissioner to New Zealand, offered his advice from Wellington: "Canada, at the present time, is in a strong position to claim preferential representation on the Security Council because of her contribution to the war effort. Her claim, therefore, should be based on her power and readiness to collaborate in combatting aggression. I do not believe anything will be gained by going to the San Francisco Conference with pistol or with cap in hand." DEA, file 7-V(s), despatch no. 28, Riddell to King, 12 March 1945. One must admire Riddell's tenacity in trying to influence a Prime Minister who never forgave past transgressions, and would therefore ignore anything Riddell said.



In Ottawa there was less daring and more pragmatism. Robertson and Wrong laboured under a political master whose conversation to collective security had come grudgingly, the League being perceived by the Prime Minister as more of a conciliatory body than a coercive one. Old habits were hard to break, especially for Mackenzie King, but the experience of the war, and Robertson and Wrong's moderating influence, eventually brought him to see military coercion as "an ultimate means of maintaining peace".<sup>22</sup> He could not be expected to take the great powers to task over the sweeping voting powers they had given themselves at Yalta, especially the unanimity provision in the Security Council. The Prime Minister stated that the Yalta voting formula represented an achievement of substantial unity among the great powers which should not be unwisely rejected outright, but viewed with an open mind. "It would not be realistic," King told the members of the House of Commons on 20 March, "to expect to establish immediately any international system strong enough to coerce any great military power bent on attaining its aims by force."<sup>23</sup>

When it came to the proposed Economic and Social Council, there was a greater amount of consensus among Canadian officials. A meeting with several key members of the Department of Finance, including W.A. Mackintosh and R.B. Bryce, as well as Louis Rasminsky of the Bank of Canada, helped to establish Canadian policy as being generally in favour of the scheme as set out in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. Concern was expressed, however, over the relationship of the various functional agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the International Monetary Fund, to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The International Labour Organization, for example, had indicated that it would be opposed to having its budget screened by the Economic and Social Council, since the League Assembly had always done this in the past.<sup>24</sup> The Canadians would be very active in discussions concerning this Council at San Francisco.

---

22. King's remark had come at the height of the conscription crisis. King Diary, 25 October 1944. For an informative discussion of Mackenzie King's views on international organization, see Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada; Peacemaking and Deterrence*, pp. 139-142.

23. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 20 March 1945, p. 28.

24. DEA, file 7-V(s), memorandum by Wrong, "Social and Economic Aspects of the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals", 2 March 1945; also memorandum by F.H. Soward to Wrong, 9 March 1945.

Mackenzie King visited Franklin Roosevelt in early March for discussions on a variety of topics, including the forthcoming conference at San Francisco. Wrong advised the Prime Minister of his growing concern about the failure of the United States to recognize the desire of secondary powers to participate in decisions involving their own interests:

One does not wish to be plaintive or to ask for compliments. Few things, however, seem harder to achieve than to persuade the great powers to look at the position fairly from the point of view of the smaller responsible countries among the Allies. Once the concentration on the single objective of victory has ended with its attainment, this tendency of the great powers will become more disruptive and dangerous than it is at present.<sup>25</sup>

The question of recognition of the part of the smaller powers was discussed by the two leaders, but with no discernible change on anyone's part. The President, recognizing an opportunity for publicity when he saw it, called for the issue of a communique and asked the Canadians to draft one. Finding it too colourless, Roosevelt and his officials suggested a phrase referring to the elimination of "all trade discrimination", which Mackenzie King alertly recognized as an attack on imperial preference. The Canadian Prime Minister would not accept this and countered with a sentence which stated that Canada and the other middle powers would be asked to play a part in the world organization which would match their wartime contributions. Now it was the President who demurred, the resultant colourless communique proving once again that questions of international organization did not lend themselves well to Canadian-American summit diplomacy.<sup>26</sup> Mackenzie King, however, played up the visit for maximum political impact, blending statesmanship with political savvy, and did nothing to silence flattering rumours that he was to be the chairman of the forthcoming general conference.<sup>27</sup>

---

25. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 339, file 3672, memorandum from Wrong to King, 5 March 1945.

26. Pearson Diary, 13 March 1945. Lord Halifax informed the Foreign Office that "He (Pearson) did not believe for a moment that official American attitude would be changed in the least as a result of Mackenzie King's visit." Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2009/12/70, cable from Halifax to Eden, 21 March 1945.

27. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U1860/12/70, cable from Halifax to Eden, 15 March 1945.



On 30 March, the news that the United States and the Soviet Union had secretly agreed at Yalta to give each other three votes in the Assembly of the new organization broke upon the unsuspecting Canadians and even several surprised members of the State Department. Pearson recorded in his diary that it was "the most ridiculously stupid thing for the Americans to have done...of course the old argument of six British votes had cropped up."<sup>28</sup> In Ottawa there was anger but more resignation, the inclusion of the Byelorussian and Ukrainian republics being perceived as the price to be paid for Soviet membership in the United Nations. Norman Robertson however met with both Ray Atherton, the American ambassador, and Malcolm MacDonald to indicate the displeasure of the Canadian government and to express the view that American press comment, in comparing the proposed three votes for the United States with the British Commonwealth votes, was only diverting criticism from the questionable Soviet plan for three votes.<sup>29</sup> The British had not anticipated much adverse publicity when

---

28. Pearson Diary, 30 March 1945.

29. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2595/12/70, cable from Malcolm MacDonald to Lord Cranborne, 31 March 1945. Gladwyn Jebb's minute of 2 April on this cable: "This is really a very sad business." Jebb had earlier told John Holmes that although he objected to the principle of the representation of the two Soviet republics, the British would draw the line at including the Lithuanian SSR, and in practice the representation would do no harm, helping to counter the Latin American bloc. DEA, file 7-V(s), Holmes to Wrong, 23 February 1945. The British ambassador to the Soviet Union, Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, had assured Dana Wilgress, the Canadian ambassador, that Canadian interests had been upheld at the Yalta meeting, but the Soviets had centred on the United Kingdom's weak point - India - in their arguments. Averell Harriman, the American ambassador, had remarked that Soviet conference tactics had been superb. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "World Organization", copy of despatch no. 145, Wilgress to King, 22 March 1945. The issue was raised again a decade later when the United States released its documents on the Yalta Conference as part of its cold war strategy. An unsigned Canadian report at that time indicated that "The Soviet Union, as near as one can make out, obtained the agreement of the United States and the United Kingdom for its multiple membership on the sole basis of the Commonwealth analogy. It might easily be that Churchill, having no interest in whether the Soviet Union had multiple membership or not, was not disposed to argue. The Americans appear to have accepted the analogy as accurate and even sought to use it to support their own case for multiple membership..." DEA, file 7-CS(s), unsigned report, n.d. (1955).

they had originally agreed to the American-Soviet compromise at Yalta, but now they were embarrassed. Ironically, it was now none other than Lord Halifax in Washington who suggested that as much publicity as possible should be given to past occasions such as the Chicago civil aviation conference where the Dominions had taken different positions from the United Kingdom.<sup>30</sup> If Mackenzie King knew of the efforts of Halifax in this regard, he surely must have taken quiet satisfaction. Fortunately for all concerned, the American side of the bargain was hurriedly dropped.

Shortly after all the hue and cry over the extra seats, a pre-San Francisco conference Commonwealth meeting was held in London. Having the meeting had been the suggestion of Field Marshal Smuts and Herbert Evatt, the vocal Australian Minister of External Affairs, and the United Kingdom had agreed to it, not for purposes of necessarily establishing a common policy, but to further a broad understanding of the positions Commonwealth members would take at the general conference. Lord Cranborne, now Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, was aware of nationalistic feelings within the Dominions, especially in the wake of the recent voting issue, and in a peculiar message to Churchill, urged that a cautious approach be taken at the Commonwealth meeting: "As you know, the Dominions are extremely - to my mind absurdly - sensitive about being regarded as a sectional bloc...Any suggestion that we endorse the idea that the Commonwealth constitutes a bloc of six votes would certainly have an unfavourable reaction from Dominion Governments and might make it most difficult to bring them into line."<sup>31</sup> If the meeting proved anything, it was that there was no question of a "one voice" Commonwealth policy, or of bringing anyone "into line", although the Dominions tried to do just that with the United Kingdom. In Vincent Massey's words, "If the delegations had cast votes on each issue, the United Kingdom would have found it-

---

30. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2373/12/70, cable from Halifax to Eden, 2 April 1945.

31. Dominions Office, DO 121/10A, No. 111, minute from Cranborne to Churchill, 2 April 1945.



self out-voted on several matters..."<sup>32</sup>

At the meeting, New Zealand and South Africa were represented by their prime ministers, Australia by Evatt, and Canada by Wrong and Massey, Mackenzie King having decided not to forsake his parliamentary and political duties since a general election was only a few months away. Smuts was undoubtedly the outstanding figure at the meeting, appearing to take the role of a "member-at-large" through his broad philosophic approaches based upon years of experience in international affairs. He did not support the Canadian position regarding the rights of the secondary powers, clung closely to the great power view and repeatedly stated that while he disliked the rigid Yalta formula on the veto, the cooperation of the Soviet Union and the United States was worth a great price. The Australians and New Zealanders were vehement in their attacks on British plans for trusteeship as an extension of the League's mandate system, favouring the establishment of an international body attached to the world organization to which colonial powers would have to submit regular reports. Canada did not have much to contribute on this matter, but Wrong did inject a note of realism, stating that liberal opinion in the United States should not be isolated through any rigid schemes for trusteeship, and that assurance should be given at this meeting that such questions would later be examined on their merits.<sup>33</sup> He knew better than most that liberal opinion in the United States, which had always been suspicious of British imperialism, was also isolationist in its character. The delegations concluded that the veto power by the great powers on the application of sanctions would have to be accepted, but there was room to express opinions regarding the other powers of the veto. Wrong therefore optimistically concluded that issues such as the removal of

---

32. DEA, file 7-V(s), Massey to Robertson, 23 April 1945. Charles Ritchie had prepared a detailed memorandum a few months earlier on Dominion views which had indicated many areas where opinions differed. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2103, file "World Organization", "Memorandum on the Views of the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa concerning the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals on International Organizations", 7 February 1945.

33. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 387, cable no. 960, Wrong to King, 5 April 1945; also Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2483/12/70, B.C.M. (45)4, "British Commonwealth Meeting", 29 March 1945.

the veto on consideration of disputes to which the great powers were not a party could be examined in detail at San Francisco.<sup>34</sup>

There was a wide divergence of views on the question of limiting the power of the Security Council to require all members of the organization to take enforcement action. Australia and India made a strong case for collective security, and maintained that a universal obligation to enforce sanctions at the call of the Security Council was an essential principle. In return, Wrong offered the familiar Canadian approach: public and parliamentary support would be exceedingly difficult to obtain, and consultation with the states needing to take serious action would almost certainly occur. If consultation were written into the Charter, ratification in several countries including Canada would be made much easier. Prime Minister Peter Fraser of New Zealand, in Massey's eyes the only "Wilsonian" present, went much further, arguing that all enforcement decisions made by the Council should be confirmed by a simple majority in the Assembly.<sup>35</sup> Clearly, no consensus among Commonwealth members on this issue was possible, and the Canadian position did not receive much sympathy.

Canadian concerns which had only developed recently were discussed on the last day of the conference. All delegations agreed with the Canadian view that provision should be made for a general review of the Charter after five or ten years but were lukewarm in supporting Wrong's proposal that an opportunity for withdrawal might be afforded at this review. All agreed that a preamble setting forth the high principles and purposes of the Charter should be added - Smuts had already drafted a stirring one - but there was little discussion of

---

34. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 387, cable no. 1020, Wrong to King, 10 April 1945; also J4 Series, vol. 238, file 2353, copy of United Kingdom document B.C.M. (45)9, "Questions Arising from the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals Put Forward for Discussion by the Canadian Delegation", 5 April 1945.

35. *Ibid.*, cable no. 1021, Wrong to King, 10 April 1945; also DEA, file 7-V(s), Massey to Robertson, 23 April 1945.



economic and social aspects.<sup>36</sup>

The question which most preoccupied Canadian minds, however, was how the middle powers could effectively and fairly be represented on the Security Council, or in other words, the ultimate recognition in the Charter of the functional principle. The Foreign Office, quite unlike the State Department, had in the past months assured Canadian officials that work was progressing on proposals addressing this problem, but there was no certainty as to what criteria would be necessary for classification, especially since both the United States and the Soviet Union wished a Security Council with a small membership. A scheme was eventually developed by the British which consisted of representation for states of three categories: firstly, middle powers such as Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, India, Mexico, the Netherlands, and Poland; secondly, those Latin American countries not mentioned in the first group; and thirdly, the rest of the world. Two seats were to be allotted to each category.<sup>37</sup> Dominions Office officials were certain that Canada would find the scheme unacceptable, and in any event it was rejected by the British War Cabinet on 3 April, which recommended that one member should be elected from each of the six main territorial groups. Sir Alexander Cadogan sought to calm his officials who still sensed a Churchillian plot to organize the world by regions, by explaining that "it was only a suggestion thrown out at the end of a discussion by a rather jaded Cabinet." He wisely added:

---

36. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 387, cable no. 1053, Wrong to King, 13 April 1945; also J4 Series, vol. 342, file 3679, memorandum by Wrong, "Questions arising from Dumbarton Oaks Proposals on which further guidance seems desirable Before the Commonwealth discussions in London", 15 March 1945. This memorandum was closely studied by Mackenzie King and the marginal minutes indicated that he entirely approved of the course being taken by Wrong.

37. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U1958/12/70, "Meeting held at Foreign Office", March 1945. Ernest Bevin strongly believed that the size of the Council should be increased from 11 to 14 and suggested to Eden that although it may appear easier to get a decision when there are no more than 11 members, this apparent advantage would be nullified by the hostility created by the insufficient representation of countries generally. Eden was in accord but stated that no one had yet devised an acceptable formula. U1816/12/70 Bevin to Eden, 6 March 1945; Eden to Bevin, 17 March 1945.

"But I must say 'our' proposal, for a list of 'middle states' is I think, probably not practical politics."<sup>38</sup> The list never emerged, and instead there was general agreement among the Dominions at the London meeting that in electing non-permanent members of the Security Council, the Assembly "should pay due regard to the contribution of the members of the Organisation towards the maintenance of international peace and security and towards the other purposes of the Organisation." "This is, in fact," Wrong cabled Ottawa, "as good a proposal as I expected we could get."<sup>39</sup> Canadian expectations had certainly fallen since Mackenzie King had enunciated the functional principle in July 1943.

General agreement had been achieved among Commonwealth members on several matters, but on none of the vital issues. Perhaps the greatest value of these discussions was that a significant precedent for discussion amongst Commonwealth members was set which would continue in the established United Nations. The talks were constructive, and as Massey wrote Robertson, "It was satisfying also to attend a Commonwealth meeting at which practically no time was given up to introspective examination of the nature of the Commonwealth, and there was, therefore, full time for the real purposes of consultation."<sup>40</sup> Commonwealth members had convinced themselves that the idea of a common policy was a myth; they would prove this to the world at San Francisco.

There was yet another meeting of international significance before the nations gathered at San Francisco. Although the Dumbarton Oaks proposals had provided for an international court, there had

---

38. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2514/12/70, minute by Cadogan, 4 April 1945. Gladwyn Jebb was annoyed by the Cabinet recommendation; "Surely the Cabinet could not have agreed to this proposal? For, if it were put into operation, it would seem that Canada would have a one in ten chance of being elected to the Council, India a one in nine chance, South Africa a one in four chance and Australia and New Zealand a one in two chance. Difficult though our proposal may have been it is logic itself compared to any system based on the principle now apparently decided on by the Cabinet..."; minute by Jebb, 4 April 1945.

39. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 387, cable no. 1020, Wrong to King, 10 April 1945.

40. DEA, file 7-V(s), Massey to Robertson, 23 April 1945.



been no details, and it was left to a meeting of an International Committee of Jurists in Washington in early April to produce a draft chapter for the United Nations Charter and a draft statute. The Canadian Bar Association, meeting during the summer of 1944, had formed a committee to examine questions of international organization which was chaired by Chief Justice Farris of British Columbia. It made recommendations to the federal government which were studied with interest by the Legal Adviser in the Department of External Affairs, John Read. Read and Farris attended the meeting in Washington along with other representatives of the allied nations and generally pursued a cautious line. The Canadians however did not support United Kingdom proposals to reduce the number of judges on the proposed international court from fifteen to nine, and worked successfully with representatives of smaller nations to ensure the elimination of the great power veto over the election of judges.<sup>41</sup> Read himself would be among the first group of judges to be elected to the International Court of Justice in 1946.

Canada was interested in having the old statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice amended, so as to ensure continuity in the development of international law, but both the Soviet Union and the United States favoured a new court. The central issue, and one which had perennially occupied international law during the time of the League, was the question of the "optional clause", a declaration to which states adhered to express their acceptance of the jurisdiction of the court with reservations. Canada had adhered to the optional clause in 1929, having expressed reservations, like many other countries, to the court's jurisdiction on matters which fell under domestic purview, and, in addition, on Commonwealth disputes *inter se*. Compulsory jurisdiction was recognized by Canada as being an ultimate goal, but Read, like some of the other senior members of his department, realized the limitations to such idealism: "I should be somewhat concerned about the possibility of breaking the whole San Francisco conference on this issue, or of reviving the isolationist move-

---

41. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 339, file 3672, confidential print, "Establishment of International Court of Justice and other Legal Questions; Washington, 9 April 1945 - San Francisco, 25 April 1945", p. 8.

ment on this continent, in the event of acceptance of compulsory jurisdiction followed by a fight in the Senate of Washington on ratification."<sup>42</sup> Points upon which Canada had placed a large amount of emphasis were on securing a scheme acceptable to both Washington and Moscow, maintaining continuity in international law, and preserving both existing jurisdiction under the optional clause and particular treaties. All these issues had been well studied by the International Commission of Jurists, and its draft recommendations were in turn quickly dispensed with at San Francisco, unlike other matters. In a related area of international law, and consistent with its support of the powers and functions of the General Assembly, Canada avidly supported Chinese proposals for the Assembly to have the power to both enact new general rules and codify international law,<sup>43</sup> a measure which was diluted by the great powers at San Francisco, but was eventually included in the United Nations Charter in Article 13:1(a).

Although it could not be said that Canadian policy-makers were pessimistic about the forthcoming conference at San Francisco, they were not optimistic either. Wrong was convinced that the success of the conference would hinge on whether the Soviet delegation would be able to be flexible in negotiation. Molotov's presence as head of the delegation was therefore essential, since he would be able to exercise greater discretion on a daily basis than other Soviet representatives. Should he not attend, "...there will be a long, quarrelsome and unproductive conference."<sup>44</sup> Pearson, certainly the most optimistic among the Canadian officials, also had his moments of despair which he confided to his diary. His position as Canadian "Minister-Counsellor" and then ambassador in Washington had been frustrating, since the Americans seemed to be too preoccupied with their own vital interests in the international organization; Canadian problems paled by comparison. When it came to contacts with the Americans, Pearson had a sharp eye for the ironic: Senator Vandenberg, a long-standing

---

42. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, cable no. WA2055, Read to Robertson, 17 April 1945.

43. DEA, file 7-V(s), memorandum by John Read, "The Procedure for preparing the Statute of the International Court of Justice and for establishing the Court", 25 January 1945.

44. *Ibid.*, Wrong to Wilgress, 10 March 1945.



member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, confessed to Pearson that he had never been to an international conference in his life and was looking forward to going to San Francisco "to see how one worked."<sup>45</sup> Yet sometimes the obvious did not register as clearly. For example, Pearson had told John Hickerson of the State Department that it would have been in the United States' greater interest to have shown more desire to secure Canadian views on the Dumbarton Oaks proposals than it had, given the closeness of the Canadian-American relationship. As a result, Canada would have been freed from being totally dependent on the United Kingdom. Hickerson brusquely replied that Canada had no cause whatsoever to complain, since it had been in a privileged position compared to other countries. Pearson concluded that Hickerson needed to get away for a good long rest.<sup>46</sup>

In retrospect, the Canadians can be accused of having suffered at least a little myopia in presenting their views in the months before the San Francisco conference. The policy-makers and diplomatic representatives laboured mightily to convince the great powers of the righteousness of the Canadian cause, but overlooked the utility of securing allies in the form of the smaller nations. It is doubtful, however, whether such actions would have made any difference, other than increasing Canadian prestige and securing numerical support for later elections to the councils. The relationship which Canada had cultivated with both the United Kingdom and the United States would not have allowed this either. The positions expressed by Latin American countries to Canadian representatives were never taken seriously in Ottawa,<sup>47</sup> mainly because of the close consultative relationship

---

45. Pearson Diary, 5 March 1945.

46. Pearson Papers, vol. 2, Pearson to Robertson, 3 November 1944.

47. Hugh Keenleyside, the Canadian ambassador to Mexico, had sent a lengthy and enthusiastic despatch dealing with Mexican views of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals. There were similarities between the Mexican and Canadian positions regarding the General Assembly and voting in the Security Council by nations party to a dispute. The Mexicans favoured including a statement on principles of conduct in the Charter. DEA, file 7-V(s), despatch no. 43, Keenleyside to King, 22 February 1945. The Mexican views attracted some attention within the Department by April and were mentioned in the commentary prepared for delegates to the San Francisco conference, but by that time it was too late to consult with the Mexicans. DEA, Policy Documents Series, vol. 2358, file S/148/1, "Commentary on Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for Preparation for San Francisco Conference", 14 April 1945.

existent between Canada and the United Kingdom and the lesser one with the United States, which tended to inflate an already existent - though perhaps unconscious - elitism. Canada eschewed the enthusiastic boosterism of the Australians and the New Zealanders both at the London meeting and in public pronouncements afterwards, preferring to appear willing to work quietly, thereby giving the great powers the manoeuvrability they sorely required to reach agreement among themselves. It was hoped that the value of having taken the high road would not be completely lost on the great powers when the time came to consider Canadian points of view at the forthcoming general conference.

But there was another reason for caution. In spite of favourable opinion polls, wide circulation of Canadian views could lead to public disclosures, which could prove embarrassing to a government recovering from a conscription crisis. Furthermore, if efforts to secure Canadian amendments should prove unsuccessful, the opposition parties could inject these "failures" into the forthcoming election campaign. To an extent the cautious attitude also reflected the personality of the Prime Minister and his control of the Department of External Affairs. It was for this reason that, when the United States offered to circulate in advance any observations of countries attending the San Francisco conference to other nations, Wrong and Robertson recommended to the Prime Minister that a memorandum should be prepared which would only be distributed to other countries at the beginning of the conference if circumstances made this desirable.<sup>48</sup> The Latin American countries and France had circulated their recommendations before the conference, and it is of interest to note that the French went so far as to refer to some countries in the category of *l'état moyen*.<sup>49</sup> It would have seemed only too logical that Canada, as the originator of the term "middle power", and the only nation to refer to itself as such, could have exhibited a little more daring at this time.

\* \* \*

---

48. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 339, file 3672, memorandum from Wrong to King, 15 March 1945, with notes by Robertson.

49. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 339, file 3673, confidential print, "Selected Amendments to the Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for the Establishment of a General International Organization", 25 April 1945, pp. 2-6.



Mackenzie King led an extraordinary delegation to San Francisco in late April 1945. The delegates included Louis St. Laurent, the Minister of Justice; J.H. King, the leader of the Government in the Senate; Gordon Graydon, the Conservative House Leader; M.J. Coldwell, the leader of the CCF; Lucien Moraud, a Conservative senator; and to represent women, Mrs. Cora Casselman, a member of parliament. The "senior advisers" included Robertson, Wrong, Pearson and Major-General Maurice Pope, the Prime Minister's military staff officer. That group was completed by three Canadian ambassadors from far-flung missions: Warwick Chipman from Chile, Jean Désy from Brazil, and Dana Wilgress from the Soviet Union. Among the "special advisers" were Escott Reid, Charles Ritchie and Louis Rasminsky.<sup>50</sup> As Pearson recorded in his diary, "For a few weeks at least, Canada will probably have a national government - at San Francisco!"<sup>51</sup> The idea of an all party delegation was a good one, since it would be a new parliament which would have to debate the acceptance of the Charter following the June election. On the other hand, the politicians would be absent for a crucial six weeks of the conference, and even while at the conference Mackenzie King was almost exclusively preoccupied with the election and with making a rousing broadcast to Canada on 8 May, V-E Day.<sup>52</sup> All delegates however conducted their conference

---

50. Among the others present were the Prime Minister's staff, including J.W. Pickersgill and James Gibson; Davidson Dunton of the Wartime Information Board, and Gordon Robertson as head of the secretariat. Keenleyside, the ambassador in Mexico, had wished to attend, but Désy had to supply some French Canadian weight to the delegation, and Chipman, a lawyer, was needed to handle legal questions since John Read had remained in Ottawa as Acting Under-Secretary. DEA, General Registry file 7391-D-40, cable from Robertson to Keenleyside, 7 April 1945. John Diefenbaker, a Conservative member of parliament who would become Prime Minister in 1957, wished to attend in an advisory capacity to Graydon, but his request was declined. Robertson to Diefenbaker, 18 April 1945. Undeterred, Diefenbaker went to San Francisco as a tourist and managed to attend some public sessions with a "borrowed" pass. Interview with J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980.

51. Pearson Diary, 20 April 1945. Also quoted in Pearson, *Memoirs*, vol. 1, p. 274.

52. The Prime Minister's preoccupation with the election and his speech is substantiated by interviews with Gordon Robertson, 4 June 1980; James Gibson, 25 June 1980; and J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980.

work responsibly, and there was no evidence of political differences being brought to the fore.

One minor case construed to constitute political differences arose over a preliminary controversy regarding the admission to the conference of Argentina, which had not been invited to this conference nor to the earlier meeting of American countries at Chapultepec because of its contacts with the Axis powers and its repressive domestic policies. After an appeal from the Latin Americans, it was reluctantly agreed to invite Argentina to San Francisco. At a press conference, Coldwell expressed the opinion that Canada had made a mistake in supporting the admission of Argentina, arguing that before being admitted, Argentina should have eased internal repression.

"This would have shown there was a possibility of the Argentine Republic coming into the organisation as one of the peace-loving and democratic countries."<sup>53</sup> Coldwell had merely given voice to what many were feeling. The Prime Minister believed that the correct decision had been made, and that Canada as a country of the Western Hemisphere, had done well to support the hemispheric consensus:

"One, in these matters, has to use one's own judgment. I find there is a terrible tendency to make sensations out of everything. The whole atmosphere of the conference is that of a seething pot, especially with the press as well as delegates ready to create sensations, and to arouse and foster suspicions."<sup>54</sup> Here, as in everything else, King favoured a conciliatory approach.

In his opening speech to the conference, Mackenzie King described in the high moral tones which echoed those of his favourite book, *Industry and Humanity*, the Canadian goal of helping "to bring into being a world community in which social security and human welfare will become a part of the inheritance of mankind."<sup>55</sup> The speech

---

53. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 338, file 3668, transcript of Coldwell press conference, 1 May 1945.

54. King Diary, 30 April 1945.

55. Canada, Department of External Affairs, *Conference Series* 1945, no. 2, "Report on the United Nations Conference on International Organization held at San Francisco, 25 April-26 June, 1945", p. 10. In drafting the speech, Pickersgill had in fact adapted a few passages from *Industry and Humanity*. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3676, note by J.W. Pickersgill on draft of speech, n.d.



represented a combination of the Prime Minister's wish to capture an historic moment, and his desire to capture the electorate in June. His influence at San Francisco was probably greater than he or his advisers thought at the time. He attended a few of the infrequent meetings of Commonwealth delegations but did not contribute much, largely because of his exasperation at the tirades of Herbert Evatt of Australia and Peter Fraser of New Zealand, whom he characterized as "these constitution makers who are trying to change the world at once."<sup>56</sup> A meeting in Smuts' apartment between the Dominions without the presence of the United Kingdom, followed by a late session with Eden shortly before the Foreign Secretary's departure, addressed the Canadian concern over the participation of non-permanent members of the Security Council in enforcement decisions when asked to assist in providing military sanctions. The Antipodean-British row over trusteeship, in which Canada had little interest, made it difficult to ascertain how much progress had been made. Three days later, on the day he left San Francisco, King met with Stettinius and again lucidly presented the familiar Canadian case: "In the first place, we did not want to get out of doing our just share. All that we wanted to do was to be able to assure our people of the fairness of what we were being asked to do."<sup>57</sup>

The negotiations were left to Norman Robertson and his officials, who, although by now well-acquainted with the committee-work of international discussions, but unable to exercise the suasion of their political masters, had to rely on their wits to promote the Canadian causes.<sup>58</sup> This was just as well, because Evatt had taken an obstreperous role in defending the rights of the smaller powers himself. The calibre of Canadian officials had been recognized before the conference, especially by the British who saw them as "experienced in the ways of international conferences, and adept at getting along with Americans." The Foreign Office believed that if Canadian views could be supported in some instances, then the Canadians could be useful in return. If not, "the U.K. delegation might

---

56. King Diary, 3 May 1945.

57. King Diary, 14 May 1945.

58. See John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, vol. 1, p. 246; also interview with Charles Ritchie, 20 June 1980.

be well-advysed to be very wary of the manoeuvres of the Canadian delegation, which will use every expedient, including the good will to Canada of the Latin American delegations and the Canadian link with France to put their wishes across at the conference."<sup>59</sup> These preliminary British fears were not realized, as indicated in a summary prepared during the closing days of the conference for the Foreign Office: "The Canadians have been one of the strongest and ablest teams at the conference. They have displayed a real solicitude for the welfare of the organisation and have worked closely with us."<sup>60</sup> Canada managed to "work with" the United Kingdom while taking stands against it and the other great powers on various issues, and with its seasoned skill at drafting compromises, was able to get some portions of the Charter revised.

Before much in the way of compromises could be accomplished, however, the Canadian delegation had to contend with divergent feelings within it, bearing in mind the instructions the Prime Minister had left that nothing should be attempted which would try to change the great power consensus established at Yalta. Robertson and Wrong were cautious and aware of Canadian political realities, Pearson somewhat bolder in advancing Canadian positions, and Reid extremely idealistic and willing to take chances. General Maurice Pope preferred a middle course: "We should have enough confidence in ourselves to make up our own minds on a great range of questions that will arise, or have arisen, without taking a British or American line...I firmly believe that we are right in taking a back seat at this Conference, but I do not go so far as to believe that we should

---

59. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U2179/12/70, Ben Cockram (U.K. Embassy, Washington) to Gladwyn Jebb, 20 March 1945. During the conference, a Canadian columnist described Canada's leading three officials in the following manner: Norman Robertson "has a massive head, great brown eyes, and a mouth that always seems reluctant to talk too much." Hume Wrong is "the fellow who lets the other guy get out on the end of the limb... he has a Macchiavellian eye, and knows his way around." Pearson "...is as useful a man as there is at the entire conference." Pearson Diary, 23 May 1945.

60. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U4957/12/70, Summary from United Kingdom delegation, San Francisco (prepared by Philip Noel-Baker) to Foreign Office, 23 June 1945.



sit outside in the hall and not in the Committee Room."<sup>61</sup> From Mexico, Ambassador Hugh Keenleyside indicated his disappointment at what he thought was a lack of Canadian idealism: "I feel some personal regret that the Canadian position on the problems discussed at London and San Francisco has been so strictly conditioned by what seems to me to be an excessively cautious interpretation of what is immediately 'practical'."<sup>62</sup> Delegation control was however securely in the hands of the pragmatists.

Considering the activities of the Canadian delegation, differences in approach or stress among officials should not be regarded as having been overly serious. Canada was represented on three controlling committees: the Steering Committee, the Executive Committee, and the Coordination Committee, all of which also had sub-committees. In addition, ten of the twelve Technical Committees met each day, the last three, as someone said, meeting "from 8:30 p.m. until unconditional surrender." Wrong informed John Read, the Acting Under-Secretary in Ottawa, of the situation: "What time one has between attending meetings and preparing for them is given up to ensuring reasonable liaison inside the delegation and a good deal of inter-delegation contact."<sup>63</sup> Commonwealth meetings were rare, and there were fewer meetings with the Americans. The Canadians shared several dinner meetings with a few of the Latin American delegations, leading Pearson to observe that Canada appeared to be gaining admission into the Pan-American Union via the culinary route.<sup>64</sup> Lack of consultation with the great powers was not something which bothered the Canadians: they realized the "Big Three" were scrambling to resolve their own differences.

---

61. Maurice Pope Diary, volume 1, 10 May 1945.

62. DEA, file 5475-40 Part 3, despatch no. 174, Keenleyside to King, 31 May 1945.

63. DEA, file 7-V(s), Wrong to Read, 13 May 1945.

64. Pearson Diary, 16 May 1945.

The issue which would either ensure the success of the conference or its failure was the great power veto. The Canadian attitude to this problem at San Francisco could be best described as being pragmatic yet principled. The Yalta compromise on the veto, which in essence stipulated that the five permanent members of the Security Council - France had now joined the group - would have the right to veto any punitive action proposed by the organization, was viewed by Canada as being irreversible, but more progressive than past Soviet entreaties for individual veto powers on discussions themselves. Where there was room for compromise was on the veto powers over amendments to the Charter and over the consideration of disputes to which the great powers were not a party.<sup>65</sup> Pearson's opinion, ventured during the early stages of the conference, and agreed to by the Prime Minister, was "I think we should support any reasonable move to limit the veto strictly to the actual application of sanctions, but that we should not press this position to a vote in the face of strong Big Four opposition."<sup>66</sup> In this fashion, Canada supported a Netherlands proposal which suggested that a great power party to a dispute should not be able to veto the determination by the Security Council of the existence of a threat to the peace or an act of aggression. A similarly unsuccessful effort was made to ensure that decisions taken by the Security Council on the peaceful settlement of disputes should not require great power unanimity but a two-thirds vote by Council members not party to the dispute.<sup>67</sup>

Acceptance of these provisions appeared hopeful, at least until the second week in June when the "Battle of the Veto" took place. The Soviet Union had changed its mind, and now believed that the veto should apply to placing a subject for discussion on an agenda. The inevitable compromise, the result of some negotiation in Moscow, was

---

65. DEA, Policy Documents Series, vol. 2358, file S/148/1, confidential print, "Commentary on Dumbarton Oaks Proposals for Preparation for San Francisco Conference", 14 April 1945, pp. 81-83.

66. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3695, Pearson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Questions of Policy Coming Before Commission III, Committee 1; The Security Council: Composition, Powers and Procedures", 13 May 1945.

67. *Ibid.*, Reid to Robertson, 12 May 1945.



that a full discussion of a dispute could be held in the Security Council, but when discussion reached the point of investigation of facts, the veto would become operative. The Soviets clearly cast this new proposal in the light of a great concession, the other great powers really having no choice but to present a united front, and this angered the smaller nations. A meeting of the committee dealing with the veto ended in a shouting match between Professor Webster and Senator Conally of the British and American delegations on the one side, and Messrs. Evatt and Fraser of Australia and New Zealand on the other, Fraser going so far as to accuse the British of going back on promises made during the London Commonwealth meeting two months earlier, and to call Webster's argument "dishonest" and Webster himself "contemptible". It was here that Pearson was "volunteered" by Robertson to pour oil on troubled waters, and Pearson interrupted to say that the meeting would surely not wish to hear "a speech from another member of that well-known British Empire bloc, a few chips from which seem to have fallen this evening and the members of which can argue against each other as violently in the Committee rooms as they can fight together enthusiastically, side by side, on the battlefield."<sup>68</sup> The tension had been relived, but not diffused.

Now it was Robertson's turn to act. He cabled John Read in Ottawa, and requested an instruction of approval from the Prime Minister for the proposed Canadian course of action following the Commonwealth debacle:

Our view is that it is better to take the Organization we can get and, having come to that decision, to refrain from further efforts to pry apart the difficult unity which the Great Powers have attained. This means foregoing the luxury of making any more perfectionist speeches either on the voting procedure itself or on the general amendment procedure which is very closely linked with it...we should not insist on forcing decisions on such central questions as veto and amendment to a vote in which our association with the other middle and smaller powers might well result in the rejection of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals.<sup>69</sup>

---

68. Pearson Diary, 5 to 9 June 1945.

69. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3675, cable from Robertson to Read, 10 June 1945; also note from Read to King, 11 June 1945.

Mackenzie King agreed that the strategy proposed by Robertson and his colleagues was the most sensible one. Following Evatt's *Sturm und Drang* approach could be risky at best, especially if it meant the difference between an imperfect organization or no organization at all, which could happen if the Australians were avidly supported to the point where the great powers were defeated in committee.<sup>70</sup> Would the citizens of Canada approve if their representatives tipped the balance against the great powers? There was, however, another aspect of self-interest in the Canadian strategy. Robertson and Wrong had negotiated an arrangement with Cadogan and Jebb of the British delegation, which subsequently received great power approval, where Canada would agree to drop its amendments to Chapter VI, which dealt with the right of any member to vote on the Security Council when its interests were particularly affected. The Canadians had been told there was little chance of their proposal being accepted. In return, the Canadian amendment to Chapter VIII, regarding the right of a member to participate on the Security Council in enforcement questions involving its own forces, would be accepted. A scheme allowing the Canadian amendments to be withdrawn gracefully from the technical committees had already been agreed upon.<sup>71</sup> Self-interest was important, and with increasing polarization between the great powers on the one hand, and Evatt and his disciples who now included the Latin Americans on the other, priorities had to be chosen. Canada therefore abstained from voting on an Australian amendment to limit the veto and the great powers had their way. A similar position was taken on the question of the great power veto on amendments, where Canada abstained once again, with the impeccable logic that if the veto had been accepted

---

70. DEA, file 7-V(s), "Report of Meeting of Canadian Delegation", 11 June 1945. Mackenzie King had won a majority government on that day but had lost his own seat in Prince Albert.

71. United Kingdom, CAB 21/1613, file 60/17/4, Record of Meeting of Officials Committee of the Five Powers, 28 May 1945. There are very few records of the San Francisco conference in the Public Record Office and fewer of British delegation meetings. A plausible explanation is the disappearance on the return journey of an aeroplane with the Legal Adviser of the Foreign Office, Sir William Malkin, and the Military Adviser, Colonel Denis Capel-Dunn on board. Many records and delegation papers were also on the aircraft.



previously, the great powers could not be asked to relinquish it on amendments, because they might lose their veto - by amendment - on everything else.<sup>72</sup>

What had Canada accomplished at San Francisco? Article 44 of the United Nations Charter, calling for participation in any enforcement decisions of the Security Council when the use of a member's forces is being considered, was enshrined and represented the success of Canadian efforts since May 1944, when the issue was first raised at the Prime Ministers' Meeting. Ironically, this article has never been used, and international peacekeeping has always been arranged by other means, since the special arrangements envisioned in Article 43 have never been attained. Nevertheless, the article was in the Charter, and public opinion, which had been such a great concern of Canadian policy-makers on this issue, would be satisfied. Interestingly, a Canadian public opinion poll published during the San Francisco conference demonstrated that 39% of the respondents favoured decisions on enforcement action by all nations equally, 29% by the great powers only, and 27% by the great powers with certain "middle powers". In Quebec, only 12% favoured decisions by the great powers, 30% for the great powers with some middle powers, and 50% for decisions by all.<sup>73</sup> Article 32, providing for the invitation of a state party to a dispute but a non-member of the Security Council to participate in its discussions, has had greater historical impact, although a joint effort on the part of Canada and the Netherlands to give such states an equal vote, along with the other party to the dispute, was opposed by the great powers.<sup>74</sup>

---

72. Pearson Diary, 16 June 1945. Evatt led this fight as well and seemed to be everywhere at once. Pearson recognized Evatt's outstanding abilities, but like most, did not like his confrontationist and boisterous style. For example, after a speech by Senator Tom Connally of Texas, the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and an old-style Southern orator, Evatt assured the Senator publicly that if he were ever to lose his seat, he would easily find employment with the Ringling Brothers Circus. Pearson Diary, 17 June 1945.

73. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 427, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, Document no. 984, Wartime Information Board Survey no. 63, 19 May 1945.

74. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3695, Wrong, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister: Questions Arising in the Committee on Enforcement Arrangements", 13 May 1945.

Canada had been particularly active on economic and social questions, which had only begun to interest Canadian policy-makers following the discussions with the Americans earlier in the year. A revised draft of Chapter IX of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals concerning arrangements for economic and social cooperation was circulated by the Canadian delegation at San Francisco. The suggested proposals were ambitious and idealistic, but unlike the Canadian draft convention on civil aviation of a year earlier, perhaps overly so. The Economic and Social Council was to help attain higher standards of living, full employment, foster economic and social progress, as well as promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.<sup>75</sup> The Canadian amendments which were accepted were sensible and constructive, expanding the role of the Economic and Social Council to empower it to cooperate with the specialized agencies (Article 70), to obtain their reports of the Council's own recommendations for communication to the General Assembly (Article 64:2), and through consultation to coordinate the activities of the specialized agencies through recommendations to the General Assembly and to the individual members of the organization (Article 63:2). The predictable Canadian amendment calling for "due regard" to be shown "for the adequate representation of states of major economic importance", was withdrawn after other countries made a convincing case for flexibility of representation, in view of more expanded social responsibilities for the Council than had been originally envisioned. "This action was warmly applauded by the Committee and many congratulatory statements were made regarding the spirit of comprehension and conciliation shown by the Canadian delegation."<sup>76</sup>

During the last days of the conference, Canada sought to circumvent the agreed great power veto on amendments by securing provision for a review, a concept which had been advanced by Wrong at the London meeting. Wrong recommended that the delegation should not

---

75. DEA, file 7391-R-40C, draft "Arrangements for International Economic and Social Cooperation", n.d. (May 1945).

76. DEA, file 5475-40, report by Louis Rasminsky, "Report of Work of Commission II, Committee 3; Economic and Social Cooperation", 7 June 1945.



support a right of withdrawal clause in the Charter, but Canada would be inclined to support this right after a general revision of the Charter had taken place.<sup>77</sup> The result was the inclusion of Article 109, which appears in the Charter more as window dressing, since the great powers can veto any recommendations or amendments of a review conference. A minor triumph also occurred during the waning days of the conference when the smaller powers, led by Canada and Australia, conspired to defeat a Soviet proposal for the creation of the positions of five Deputy Secretaries-General who would represent the great powers in the secretariat. The Canadian maxim had been "the establishment of a truly international civil service with the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity."<sup>78</sup> Politics should be left out of at least the administration of the United Nations.

Canada had favoured widening the scope and the powers of the General Assembly, and had again worked in concert with other smaller countries to bring this about. An eleventh-hour desire of the Soviet Union to return to the restrictive wording regarding the General Assembly contained in the Dumbarton Oaks proposals was overcome, mainly because Senator Vandenberg and Lord Halifax had asked Pearson to intervene with Evatt, who was again girding on his armour to battle for the small power cause. The differences were therefore settled quietly.<sup>79</sup> With regard to membership in the General Assembly and of the organization, the basic preference among the Canadians, from the Prime Minister downwards, was eventual universality with more representation from Europe as soon as possible. The Canadian delegation worked hard behind the scenes in advance and in vain to secure the admission of neutral states such as Ireland. Canada had also suggested at the beginning of the conference that great power status should be given to France without delay. During the latter part of the conference, the Canadian delegation was sympathetic, as were the Americans,

---

77. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3676, cable H-300, Robertson to Read, 10 June 1945; also vol. 343, file 3695, Wrong, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister; Amendment and Revision of the Charter", 13 May 1945.

78. Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 7, memorandum from Reid to Pearson, 16 May 1945.

79. Pearson Diary, 19 June 1945.

to the inclusion of Italy in the final deliberations, but John Read, the Acting Under-Secretary in Ottawa, corrected Canadian feelings at San Francisco by arguing that acceptance of Italy "would mean an immediate recognition of peace without a peace conference, peace treaty, or the necessary negotiation for territorial or other changes."<sup>80</sup>

Canada was not very vocal on the issue of intervention by the United Nations in matters coming within the domestic jurisdiction of states, but did support the great power amendment calling for the "promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, language, religion or sex." Canada, like other nations, was not anxious to have its immigration policies examined by the organization; had to consider the position of the provinces; and, as in the case of the League, had once again been embarrassed by the efforts of its native peoples to bring their grievances to the attention of the conference.<sup>81</sup> Freedom from United Nations intervention in matters of domestic jurisdiction was eventually assured in Article 2:7.

The long-sought recognition of the functional principle was achieved with surprisingly little effort. Article 23, "the Canadian article" stipulated that in the election of members to the Security Council, due regard should be paid, "in the first instance to the contribution of members of the United Nations to the maintenance of international peace and the other purposes of the Organization." The acceptance of functionalism was very much a Pyrrhic victory, because at San Francisco, as at the civil aviation conference at Chicago, several states suggested varying criteria, including population and region. A British proposal to add "equitable geographic distribution" was accepted, and has subsequently become the determining factor. The Canadian amendment, which was quickly accepted, was just as rapidly ignored. There is a great deal of truth to the assertion made by John Holmes that "the Canadian attachment to a logical case, based on an impeccable principle of functionalism, obscured from them the political

---

80. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3676, cable D-322, Read to Robertson, 11 June 1945.

81. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3695, memorandum by Charles Ritchie, 13 May 1945.



unreality of what they sought."<sup>82</sup> In practice, conciliation and not military preparedness has become the watchword of the Security Council, and in theory and often in practice, a small power can be just as good at that as a larger one. The exclusive election of middle powers, which would have made the Security Council excessively rigid for conciliation purposes, was therefore avoided.

Although the Canadian delegation was not pleased with the final product of the conference, they realized that given the circumstances, the best possible Charter had been achieved. Robertson and Reid worked solidly during the last few days on the Coordination Committee, which polished the language and reconciled the paragraphs of various committee drafts for the final Charter. They did this with gusto, and believed that with a few more days work the document would be unrecognizable. "That is the trouble," Pearson confided to his diary; "I am afraid that the Coordination Committee are anxious to improve the document as well as the English, but the time for that has long since gone by."<sup>83</sup>

\* \* \*

The United Nations Charter was unanimously approved by the new Canadian Parliament in October 1945 in an atmosphere of international uncertainty. The war was over, but a fearsome new weapon had come into existence. In London, the breakdown in September of the Council of Foreign Ministers, established at the Potsdam Conference earlier in the summer amongst the great powers to prepare for the eventual peace settlement in Europe, increased anxieties over the prospect of effective cooperation among the great powers. Louis St. Laurent, the able "Quebec lieutenant" in a larger Liberal majority government and Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs in the absence of the Prime Minister, who was in London, summed up the serious thoughts of all members of parliament:

The conditions...under which the new organization will function will depend on the nature of the peace settlement in Europe and Asia. I use the term 'peace settlement' in the widest sense to include not only the treatment to be accorded the defeated enemy but the relations between the victorious allies...to build a solid and enduring structure

---

82. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, vol. 1, p. 252.

83. Pearson Diary, 19 June 1945.

of international security will be no easy task, but the risks of failure are beyond calculation. The coming of the atomic bomb has opened our eyes to the appalling possibilities which may face the world if the United Nations should fail to achieve international cooperation.<sup>84</sup>

In the United Nations Preparatory Commission which met in London during the summer and autumn of 1945, Canada demonstrated unwavering devotion to the success of the new organization by working quietly and effectively to develop rules and procedures which would ensure the smooth function of the various bodies comprising the United Nations. Canadian efforts here were probably more valuable in the long run than any of the amendments which had been fought for at the general conference. At San Francisco, Canada had been a member of the Executive Committee along with thirteen other states, and as a result, became a member of the Executive Committee for the Preparatory Commission, the planning body for the first Assembly of the United Nations. In addition to convoking the first session of the General Assembly, the Commission was charged with preparing provisional agendas for the first sessions of all the organs of the organization; formulating recommendations concerning the transfer of activities and assets from the old League of Nations to the United Nations; investigating the problems between existing specialized agencies and the organization; issuing invitations for nominations to the International Court of Justice; preparing recommendations concerning arrangements for the Secretariat; and lastly, suggesting a site for the permanent headquarters of the United Nations.<sup>85</sup>

It was Escott Reid's show. Although classified as an alternate delegate, Reid was in fact the cornerstone of the Canadian delegation, and with his tireless energy, deftness at procedural drafting, and idealistic zeal for the success of the United Nations, he was responsible for many of the measures introduced. Canadian insistence upon simple and clear language in the rules of procedure and staff

---

84. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 16 October 1945, p. 1202.

85. DEA, file 5475-E-40C, Reid, "Draft Memorandum on the Nature of the Instructions which might be given to the Canadian Delegation to the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations which is to meet in London on November 23, 1945", 2 November 1945.



regulations was peculiarly Reid's, who was determined to bring Senator Vandenberg's characterization of the General Assembly as "the town meeting of the world" into reality. In concert with Australia, Canada stressed the importance of agreement in advance on procedure in order to avoid wasting time on such questions at the initial sessions of the various organs. A Canadian compromise suggesting the creation of a Department of Security Council Affairs within the Secretariat neutralized Soviet demands for a separate secretariat for the Security Council. Tampering with the Security Council, however, was not always appreciated by the great powers, as in the case where procedural amendments for the Security Council were rejected in committee, while exactly the same regulations were accepted for the Economic and Social Council.<sup>86</sup> Surprisingly, Canada sided with the United Kingdom and France in preferring a European site for the United Nations, even among the ghosts of Geneva, while most other states appeared to support a site in the United States. The Canadians believed the organization would be best located where most of its work would be. The question of a location was left unresolved until the first session of the General Assembly in London in 1946, where parliamentary delegates Stanley Knowles (CCF) and Gordon Graydon (Conservative) embarrassed the government by expressing their enthusiasm for a site in Canada. From Ottawa, Mackenzie King quickly informed the delegation of his view, stating that no Canadian city was at present equipped to house the organization. One would have thought that the Prime Minister could have come up with a less parochial excuse; Montreal had after all housed the International Labour Organization during the war, and would become the home of the International Civil Aviation Organization. When the United States was eventually selected to become the headquarters of the United Nations, Canada expressed a preference for New York as opposed to San Francisco, which had been favoured by the Pacific states.<sup>87</sup>

---

86. Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 5, "Draft Report by the Canadian Delegation on the Work of the Executive Committee of the Preparatory Commission of the United Nations held at London, 16 August - 27 October 1945", 2 November 1945; also DEA file 5475-E-40C, despatch no. 1184, Wrong to Pearson, 12 October 1945.

87. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 388, cable from Robertson to Wilgress, 6 December 1945; also memorandum, Wrong to King, 5 December 1945.

In spite of many Canadian sermons during the preceding two years against self-aggrandizement on the part of any nation, Canada appeared to be a candidate for everything at the first Assembly of the United Nations in London in January 1946, but did not - at least not directly - lobby other countries for support in the various elections. Canada expected to be elected to the Security Council, to the Economic and Social Council, while a place on the Atomic Energy Commission was virtually assured because of Canada's role in the development of the atomic bomb. John Read was a candidate for the International Court of Justice; Norman Robertson and Lester Pearson were both being mentioned as possible choices for the position of Secretary-General. High Canadian expectations were a result of believing that the functional principle would be recognized by other nations; in the case of the individuals, their prowess at international negotiation had stood them in good stead.

Canada lost to Australia in a run-off vote in its bid for a seat on the Security Council. The second part of Article 23 of the Charter, "the Canadian article", which had dealt with regional distribution of seats, took precedence over the first part, which embodied the functional principle, as the regional candidates - Brazil, Egypt, Mexico, Poland, the Netherlands - were elected to the Security Council first. With thirty-four votes necessary for election, Canada secured thirty-three and Australia twenty-eight. A Nicaraguan delegate who had marked his ballot for Canada had disqualified himself by signing his name. In the two run-off votes which followed, Canada led Australia and then fell behind, and St. Laurent, who led the Canadian delegation, graciously accepted defeat, rather than allowing the struggle between the two Dominions to continue. There were several factors which contributed to Canada's misfortune, not the least of which was the tendency of all members to ignore the functional principle and follow the regional imperative in the election. Canada already seemed to be getting too much, and had not supported the Soviet Union in its bid to have open nominations. The resultant "secret diplomacy" worked against Canada, mainly because the Canadians were too high-minded to engage in conventional politicking like most other countries, and firmly declined deals which were offered by the Latin



Americans and Arabs. Paul Martin, the Canadian Secretary of State and a delegate, believed that Canada should have been more vocal: "The value of a well-placed piece of oratory on waiverers cannot be doubted."<sup>88</sup> Perhaps Evatt's style at San Francisco had finally paid off, and there is also the possibility that some countries, reminded of the practice followed in the League, saw Australia as the Commonwealth candidate. Canada was however decisively elected to the Economic and Social Council. The news of the Security Council elections did not please Pearson in Washington, and he sent a pessimistic appraisal to Robertson in Ottawa:

Our functional principle seems to have been thrown out of the window in London. In elections to the Security Council it has been subordinated to the geographical principle, while the acceptance of the view that election to the Security Council disqualifies a state for membership in the Economic and Social Council prevents, in large measure, its application to that latter body. In this connection it is interesting to note that in London these two ideas clashed...I am afraid that the election pattern which is developing in UNO, in spite of our efforts at San Francisco, and all our speeches on functional representation, will not be any better than that which prevailed in Geneva in the old days.<sup>89</sup>

Pearson almost became the first Secretary-General of the United Nations. The British had originally wanted General Eisenhower, the Americans believed that Robertson would have made a good choice, but both were unavailable and were probably not the ideal men for the job. Pearson's candidature was enthusiastically supported by the British, the Americans and the Latin American bloc - perhaps overly so in terms of tactics, since the Soviets were adamantly against someone from the "Anglo-Saxon bloc", and preferred a Slav if the organization was going to be located in the United States. Had the United States and the United Kingdom proposed a candidate more closely associated with the Anglo-Saxon great powers, such as Cadogan for example, and had they not supported Paul-Henri Spaak of Belgium against Trygve Lie of Norway so avidly for the presidency of the General Assembly, Pearson could

---

88. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 342, file 3684, commentary by Paul Martin on the First Session of the General Assembly sent to Mackenzie King, 8 April 1946.

89. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 411, Pearson to Robertson, 23 January 1946.

have emerged as a possible compromise choice instead of Lie.<sup>90</sup> Pearson had been interested in the job, but mention of his availability was so typically low-key that the American delegation in London doubted whether he would actually allow his name to stand. This was partially due to Pearson's own concerns about the details of the position: the terms of employment, salary, and pension rights. More important in Pearson's view were guarantees of freedom from outside pressure, the independence of action of the Secretary-General, as well as whether acceptance of the position would mean disqualification from subsequent national official employment. Since these matters had dragged on from the Preparatory Commission to the General Assembly in London and were still under consideration, Pearson could not receive detailed answers.<sup>91</sup> He was gracious about not getting the job, and thought that the selection of a European was inevitable and that Lie was a good choice. "I do not mind backbreaking jobs," Pearson wrote, "but heartbreaking ones are in a different category...If Lie can cut through the tangle of Russian suspicion of and United States inexperience in international administration, he will be a very great man."<sup>92</sup> Pearson would be again considered for this high office in 1950 and 1953.

Hume Wrong, the architect of most of Canada's policy toward international organization, returned from London where he had been chief adviser to the Canadian delegation a disillusioned man. The constructive side of the work of the Assembly, and especially the Economic and Social Council, had in his opinion been obscured by

---

90. Pearson Papers, vol. 11, file "UN: Secretary-Generalship", Rasminsky to Pearson, 30 January 1946; also Wrong to Robertson, 30 January 1946. Also interview with Escott Reid, 12 June 1980.

91. *Ibid.*, cable WA258, Pearson to Robertson, 15 January 1946.

92. *Ibid.*, Pearson to Rasminsky, 8 February 1946. *The Times* had the last word on 29 January: "When last the 'Big Five' discussed this matter the Russians did not wish to accept the nomination of Mr. Lester Pearson, the Canadian Ambassador in Washington. They thought, quite wrongly, that a Canadian would tend to look at problems through British or American spectacles. The suggestion is especially wide of the mark when applied to Mr. Pearson, who is a man of independent mind and great moral courage. On the other side, the British representatives did not want an East European appointed. They thought that he would not have the necessary freedom of action."



"protracted public battles which were fought over political issues regarded as having propaganda value." He deplored the tactics of the Soviet Union which depicted itself as the defender of dependent peoples, small nations, and organized labour, and was critical of the fact that the proceedings had encouraged the existence of blocs for voting purposes. Wrong was gloomiest, however, when it came to the Security Council:

The Security Council...was not meant to be an agency for the prosecution of psychological warfare or an arena for gladiatorial contests between national champions. Without a great alteration, therefore, in the attitude toward each other of the great powers - and it should be emphasized that this alteration is required not only on the part of the Soviet Government - the first meetings of the Security Council and the Assembly leave open the question whether the establishment of the United Nations has in fact furthered its primary purpose - the maintenance of international peace and security.<sup>93</sup>

The next few years did not witness a decline in the insecurities prevalent among all nations for the future prospects of the United Nations. Procedural wranglings continued in the Security Council, where the once vaunted phrase "unanimity among the great powers" was now, in Wrong's words, "that priceless euphemism."<sup>94</sup> Canada, although uneasy about the spectre of a "Commonwealth seat" on the Security Council, but realistic enough to concede that a new roster of states was again being elected according to region, replaced Australia on the Security Council in September 1947. Canada would grow more comfortable taking its turn in the seat as the Commonwealth expanded and changed. Even so, there was still pessimism within the Department of External Affairs, as evidenced in a state-

---

93. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2105, secret and personal memorandum by Hume Wrong, 27 February 1946; also Heeney Papers, vol. 1, file "Clerk of the Privy Council; Correspondence, Memoranda". Wrong had written to Heeney on 7 February: "We hope to wind up the Assembly within four or five days. Not an experience which hails to optimism. The Security Council has been a sort of verbal prize fight...To keep your illusions, keep away from conferences and don't look at our masters at close quarters."

94. DEA, Statements and Speeches Series, no. 47/14, "Canada, the United Nations, and the United States", address by Hume Wrong, Canadian Ambassador to the United States, at Tarrytown, New York, 15 September 1947.

ment approved by the Cabinet on 11 September 1947 for the guidance of the delegation to the Second Session of the General Assembly which noted that the Government was "aware that there is a possibility that issues will emerge...which may destroy the United Nations in the form in which it was conceived and established."<sup>95</sup> Nevertheless, failure to stand for the Security Council would have been a repudiation of functionalism, which although generally acknowledged within the Department as now being moribund as a policy, never did leave the minds of the policy-makers. As the thrust of their thinking on questions of security shifted from an emphasis on the United Nations to new avenues which served as preludes to the North Atlantic Treaty, what was left of the functionalist ideal underwent yet another metamorphosis.

Canadian United Nations policies will occasionally surface in later chapters, but at this point it may be of value to examine the Prime Minister's attitude toward the organization. Although Mackenzie King was hopeful for the success of the United Nations before the San Francisco conference, his attitude quickly reverted to one of suspicion when he discovered that the organization was not the conciliatory body he had envisioned. While St. Laurent was making his speech on the Charter in the House of Commons in October 1945, and the Canadian delegation to the Preparatory Commission was preparing its strategy on procedural questions, the Prime Minister was engaged in highly secret discussions in London with Prime Minister Attlee about a recently discovered Soviet espionage ring in Ottawa. This revelation increased doubts he had always entertained about the value of coercion in international organizations, and he expressed his thoughts in his diary while aboard the *Queen Mary*:

---

95. DEA, file 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "A Survey of Canadian External Policy", Chapter 6, "Canada and the United Nations", p. 3. During the summer months of 1951 and 1952, Professor F.H. Soward of the University of British Columbia, a former special assistant within the Department of External Affairs during the war, was asked by the Department to examine files on Canadian foreign policy since 1946, for the purpose of providing a series of documents which would be useful to the Minister and the officers.



[I]t is...a great mistake to develop organizations or agreements which help to relieve the anxieties and consciences of large numbers of people but which in reality are first a delusion and a snare in that they give a positive advantage to a country that does not care a rap about the sanctity of contracts. A change of heart is the only real security in a matter of the maintenance of peace.<sup>96</sup>

King's belief in peaceful conciliation and progress did not commend itself to some of the specialized agencies, most notably the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which the Prime Minister believed to be both a waste of time and money. In October 1947, Victor Doré, Canadian ambassador to Belgium and representative on UNESCO, requested an opportunity to speak to the Prime Minister to convince him that UNESCO was in fact an agency which would further peace: "De toutes les filiales de l'ONU, elle a le rôle le plus ingrat parce que'elle evolue dans l'intangible. Sa tâche n'a rien de concret qui frappe et retienne l'attention de grand public".<sup>97</sup> Perhaps King felt that too generous financial and political support for an agency with a negative public image could become a political liability, and objects of peaceful change and conciliation were therefore not as important.

It was the issue of Canadian participation on the United Nations Korean Truce Commission during the early weeks of 1948, which occasioned the Prime Minister to reach back in time to his out-dated "no commitments" philosophy. Following the failure of the United States and the Soviet Union to end their occupation through a Korean election scheme, the Americans suggested that the General Assembly should appoint a United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea (UNTCOK) to supervise an election throughout the Korean peninsula, and the proposal was passed with Soviet bloc abstentions. John Foster Dulles, the American delegate, had been instructed by Secretary of State George Marshall to offer a list of nations which would participate on the

---

96. King Diary, 4 October 1945.

97. St. Laurent Papers, vol. 33, file 267 "UNESCO", Doré to St. Laurent, 25 October 1947. King's view was also shared by Vincent Massey, who had been offered the Director-Generalship of UNESCO. Canada House Series, vol. 2104, file AR 405/1/4/9 Part 2, Massey to Robertson, 6 July 1948.

commission and Canada was among the nations put forward.<sup>98</sup> The Canadian delegate, J.L. Ilesley, now Minister of Justice, agreed, after he had heard the advice of Pearson, who was now Under-Secretary, and with the approval of Secretary of State for External Affairs and Acting Prime Minister St. Laurent, King once again being in London. The stern opposition of the Prime Minister to Canadian involvement upon his return confounded everyone, and sparked a Cabinet crisis - with St. Laurent and Ilesley threatening resignation - unprecedented since the conscription crisis of November 1944.

Pearson, charged with defending a stand against Canadian participation in the Commission which he himself did not believe in, was sent to Washington to inform President Truman that Prime Minister King would not yield, and that no Canadian would serve on the Korean Commission. Pearson was convinced that King's visit to London had made him fearful of imminent war and that his view of international relations had therefore regressed to its pre-1939 state with the United States as the villain of this piece, instead of the United Kingdom. The Prime Minister, Pearson ventured, may also have been attempting to consolidate his supremacy in the Cabinet as the day of his retirement drew nearer.<sup>99</sup> Truman's subsequent message to King did nothing to change the Prime Minister's mind, in spite of the fact that both Pearson and Wrong, now ambassador in Washington, had a hand in assisting perplexed State Department officials in drafting the response. St. Laurent eventually convinced the recalcitrant Prime Minister that there was no reasonable excuse for Canada not to participate, there being no danger of having to take sides since the

---

98. The others were Australia, China, El Salvador, France, India, the Philippines, Syria and the Ukrainian SSR. For a detailed study of Canadian policy towards Korea, see Denis Stairs, *The Diplomacy of Constraint: Canada, the Korean War, and the United States*, (Toronto, 1974).

99. Pearson Papers, vol. 8, file "Korea, Canadian Membership in UNTCOK, 1947-1948", memorandum by Pearson, "Mission to Washington on the Korean Commission, January 1-6, 1948", 10 January 1948. Pearson threw eager journalists off the trail by saying that he had come to talk to the President about Korea - they refused to believe him. Stairs suggests that King's encounter with a London spiritualist, who claimed that Franklin Roosevelt spoke through her, predicting a war in Asia, may have also influenced the Prime Minister. See Stairs, *The Diplomacy of Constraint*, p. 10.



Commission required both American and Soviet agreement to function at all. A compromise was struck, with Canada reserving the right to withdraw.

For his part, Mackenzie King believed that Canada had no business whatsoever to be in Korea since it had no interests there, and he was also wary of what he saw as a tendency of the United States to view the United Nations as an extension of the State Department. He thought the appointment of the Commission had been a mistake: "I believe, that if many more Commissions of this kind are appointed, the United Nations will not only speedily lose what measure of influence it possesses, but that it will be impossible for some of its member nations to avoid being drawn into positions of great future embarrassment to themselves."<sup>100</sup> Surely this was a voice of isolationism and not one advocating peaceful conciliation through all possible means. Ironically, Mackenzie King's fears about the Commission contained many truths, but it was too late for Canada to turn back the clock of its own development in international organizations, especially since the time was now being set by the team of St. Laurent and Pearson which believed in a more assertive foreign policy for Canada. The "no commitments" philosophy was officially dead.

The quest for an international organization which would suit Canada's needs and aspirations had taken Canada down a long road. Although it was not readily apparent in the Charter that Canada was in fact a middle power, it certainly behaved as one at the San Francisco conference and after. The idealism which had been associated with the functional principle in early 1943 had given way to a more sober and practical realism, essential for the challenges of the post-war world. Some disillusionment had set in, but Canada was committed and would not abstain or abscond from the responsibilities taken so very seriously when the Charter of the United Nations was signed and ratified. Hume Wrong crystallized Canadian feelings philosophically when he addressed the last meeting of the League of Nations in April 1946;

---

100. Pearson Papers, vol. 8, file "Korea, Canadian Membership in UNTCOK, 1947-1948", copy of a letter from King to Truman, sent as cable EX61, St. Laurent to Wrong, 8 January 1948.

Now in 1946 we have less confidence that the Charter will succeed than we had in 1919 that the Covenant would succeed. Those who have lived through the terror and glories of two great wars are bound to be disillusioned. Disillusionment, in its literal sense of the absence of illusions, is a good thing. It should mean that we see more clearly, not that we have lost hope...We must nevertheless, keep the hope and faith of the founders of the League of Nations that we can, by concerted effort, banish from the earth the most irrational of human pursuits, the waging of war.<sup>101</sup>

---

101. Wrong Papers, vol. 3, file 19 "21st and 22nd League Assemblies, 1939 and 1946", speech to the last meeting of the League Assembly, 10 April 1946.



## CHAPTER V

### THE COMMONWEALTH: A COMMON POLICY AND CONSULTATION

One of the tasks facing Canadian internationalists in the 1940s was to separate reality from rhetoric in redefining the Commonwealth relationship in a fashion which would suit Canada's growing international presence. Feelings and expressions about the Commonwealth had too often been laced with imprecisions and an overabundance of sentimentality, reflecting perhaps the association these inadequate terms were attempting to define. As late as 1947, many Britons, particularly those among the business community, still beheld the image of the Empire evoked by the "King's Christmas Dinner", which began with a South African grapefruit and ended with a Jamaican cigar.<sup>1</sup> Canada of course supplied the staples. The group photographs depicting the prime ministers of the Dominions in close consultation with the mother country conjured up a sentimental attachment to an Empire which had reached its zenith at the time of the outbreak of the Great

---

1. DEA, file 6133-40, vol. 3, Robertson to Pearson, 6 May 1947. Robertson had attended a luncheon in London where several businessmen suggested a revival of the image of the old Empire Marketing Board.

War, but which had evolved along different lines following it. During the period between the wars, "the Commonwealth", "British Commonwealth", or, to use Churchill's phrase, "the British Commonwealth and Empire", changed to become a more flexible organism, accommodating by means of the Statute of Westminster of 1931 the growing nationhood of the four Dominions. Although the Statute conferred on them the right to adopt their own foreign policies, the Dominions were still immature and untried players on the international stage, and the relationship between the component parts of the British Commonwealth - often referred to as the *inter se* doctrine - was perceived by all as unique, if not in fact interdependent in its nature. There was, for some, a tendency to wish to formalize what in fact the *inter se* relationship and consultative practice between governments approximated: a common foreign policy for all. Efforts to achieve this goal persisted well into the 1940s.

As already demonstrated in earlier chapters, the continued promulgation in various forms by the United Kingdom of a Commonwealth "single voice" foreign policy, and its tacit acceptance by the other great powers, caused acute worries for Canada in its bid to have its own functional principle recognized in the new international organizations. British policy-makers, aware that their country was gradually approaching the status of a "once great" power, sought to arrest this trend by emphasizing the function of the British Commonwealth as a great power unit in international organization. Not until the emergence of new Commonwealth members later in the decade did such notions formally come to an end.

During the interim period, it was Prime Minister Mackenzie King who played a predominant and for him instinctive role in continuing to oppose all plans for a single foreign policy. The reticence which King at times displayed at large international gatherings was not evident at Commonwealth meetings, where, once lured to the conference table, he appeared, as longtime leader of the senior Dominion and through the predictability of his attitude, to be very much in control of the proceedings and used to getting his own way. The Canadian Prime Minister was firmly supported and advised in his role before and during Commonwealth meetings by his officials in the Department of External Affairs, who, while not all sharing the inten-



sity of King's emotive responses to numerous approaches for a common foreign policy and not all as isolationist as their erstwhile tutor O.D. Skelton, nonetheless regarded policy centralization in Whitehall as anathema to Canadian foreign policy aspirations.

In mid-August 1943, following the protracted resolution of the "Canadian problem" in the effort for membership of the Central Committee of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), Hume Wrong wrote that "It is by no means wholly a paradox to maintain that the most important current problem in intra-Commonwealth relations is to make countries outside the Commonwealth understand what these relations actually are."<sup>2</sup> Perfunctory and facile explanations of the relationship would suffice for inquisitive nations of minor rank, as in the instance when a visiting Mexican foreign minister was told by Mackenzie King that the status of the Governor General was akin to that of a guest of honour at a banquet.<sup>3</sup> The great powers, however, particularly the United States, had to be made to understand that the British Commonwealth had developed into a permanent *entente cordiale*, where a group of independent states with a common sovereign pursued generally similar but independent objectives through traditionally close consultation. Convincing the Americans of this became one of the major challenges of wartime Canadian diplomacy. "Whatever may be the vestigial traces of legal dependence that remain to arouse argument among the constitutional pundits," Wrong continued in his memorandum of 17 August 1943, "they are of no more practical importance in the operation of the Commonwealth than is the vermiform appendix in the operation of the human body." Greater cooperation on the part of all Commonwealth governments, particularly the United Kingdom, was necessary to educate the world about the nature of current Commonwealth realities. Prime Minister Churchill would therefore have to abandon his view that if one Commonwealth member was associated with the United Kingdom in a policy statement, then all Dominions would automatically be associated

---

2. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 1, memorandum by Wrong, "Some Comments on Intra-Commonwealth Relations", 17 August 1943.

3. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 68, file D-12-5, S.D. Pierce (Canadian ambassador to Mexico) to L.B. Pearson, 31 July 1947.

as well. "If the functional principle has merit in problems of international organization," Wrong concluded, "it also has merit inside the Commonwealth."<sup>4</sup>

Yet there was more that Canada had to do to illustrate the difference between what really was and what others perceived to be the trappings of Empire. Canadians abroad were technically still under the mantle of British protection, since the United Kingdom fulfilled consular duties for Canada; Canadian citizens did not enjoy true "national status", and a Canadian nationality act would not be passed until 1946; nor did the Canadian Government grant passports to its citizens. Furthermore, all treaties entered into by Canada, as well as full powers for plenipotentiaries from the Department of External Affairs, were still issued under the Great Seal of the Realm and not under the Great Seal of Canada. By the end of the decade, these difficulties would have been removed, but there were still other matters to consider. The Canadian Government did not have its own system of honours and awards, and it was a rueful Lester Pearson who noted in June 1943 that the president of the University of Toronto had been made a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (C.M.G.) in the King's Honour List, a decoration given to virtually every senior official in British government departments.<sup>5</sup> Probably most striking to nations outside the Commonwealth was the fact that Canada possessed no flag of its own either. The Red Ensign had come into use during the war, but would not be affirmed by Parliament as the flag of Canada until well after hostilities had ceased. A poignant example of the importance often attached to flags occurred at the first Quebec Conference in August 1943, when Robertson, Heeney and General Pope pressed to have the Red Ensign unveiled on a pole of its own beside the Union Jack. Workmen made the inevitable mistake which resulted in both flags being flown on the same mast, the Union

---

4. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 1, memorandum by Wrong, "Some Comments on Intra-Commonwealth Relations", 17 August 1943.

5. Pearson Diary, 2 June 1943. Pearson would institute the Order of Canada awards when Prime Minister in 1967. Also, Wrong Papers, vol. 4, file 24, memorandum by John Read, "Tentative Observations on Wrong Comments; Intra-Commonwealth Relations", 21 August 1943.



Jack above. Fortunately, the situation was remedied before the arrival of the train carrying the American officials, thus avoiding embarrassment.<sup>6</sup> If these examples of Canadian dependence on the United Kingdom were what was often seen by other nations, to a degree they were also observed by the Canadian public who did not seem overly anxious for rapid change. The longevity of the King Government could well be attributed to the watchful eye it kept on Canadian public opinion.

Most perceptible was the Canadian war effort. In spite of the photographs of Mackenzie King with Roosevelt and Churchill at Quebec, Canada was not taking part in the higher strategic direction of the war. Canadian troops did not see any great action across a broad front until the invasion of Sicily in August 1943, and then the Prime Minister had to intercede to ensure public recognition of their effort. Recognition of Canada's great wartime economic role was somewhat more easily achieved, and resulted in copious outpourings of gratitude from the United Kingdom, which led Escott Reid to observe that British thanks were usually publicly expressed in the old-fashioned 'Anglo-centric' way: "those great Dominions which have worked for us so devotedly in this war."<sup>7</sup> Such statements, which undermined the functional principle, were largely accepted without question in the United States, lent truth to views of the Commonwealth as a "bloc" or "Empire", and fueled traditional American suspicions of British intentions, often expressed in American newspapers in the language of the frontier: "The city slicker John Bull will hornswoggle hayseed Uncle Sam."<sup>8</sup> At least one British official believed that the people of the United Kingdom felt very keenly the inferiority of their resources when compared to those of the United States and the Soviet

---

6. Pope Diary, vol. 1, 10 August 1943.

7. Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 5, memorandum by Escott Reid, "Memorandum for Mr. Robertson: Public Opinion in Great Britain about Canada", 7 July 1943. Reid had quoted Group Captain Helmore in the British House of Commons on 1 June 1943.

8. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 2, copy of U.K. paper, Foreign Office Research Department, United States Memoranda Series, No. 226, "Comment on the Commonwealth", 11 September 1944. The reference is from the *Chicago Sun* of 26 April 1944.

Union and that a united Empire was therefore essential in maintaining the position of Britain as a great power. Behind this argument Hume Wrong detected a feeling that because the British people had suffered most in the war, they had a moral right to expect a similar sacrifice from other Commonwealth members. "They had in short a sort of credit balance," Wrong wrote, "...and however illogical this seems on the surface, it is not psychologically inconsistent with the rather embarrassing expressions of thanks for Canadian 'generosity' which have come from United Kingdom leaders."<sup>9</sup>

To public opinion as derived from public statements in both the United Kingdom and the United States, therefore, the general tenor of the Canadian relationship with the United Kingdom at the most superficial level appeared to be dependent, if not still colonial. The Soviet Union, as indicated in previous chapters, had its own reasons for adhering to an interpretation along common lines. When these prevalent views are pitted against Wrong's assertion that the most important problem concerning intra-Commonwealth relations was outside perception of the relationship, then the public speeches by various Commonwealth statesmen in late 1943 and early 1944 assume a special significance.

In stark contrast to the excitement which followed the speech by Lord Halifax in Toronto on 24 January 1944, a more strident speech calling for a unitary Commonwealth policy by Lord Cranborne at the Guildhall in London on 23 November 1943 had raised few Canadian eyebrows. One would have thought that the words of Cranborne, who had been Dominions Secretary earlier in the war and who would succeed Attlee in that office from 1944 to the fall of the Churchill government in 1945, would have occasioned more Canadian attention. Cranborne of course did not speak on Canadian soil. Whereas Halifax had perceived the British Commonwealth acting as a great power in world councils, Cranborne had been less sentimental and more emphatic: "The nations of the Commonwealth must have one single foreign policy. That is essential. A British Commonwealth of Nations with divided

---

9. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 2, memorandum by Wrong of a conversation he had with Boyd-Shannon of the Dominions Office when the latter passed through Ottawa while en route to the civil aviation conference in Chicago, 30 October 1944.



councils on international affairs would lose all its influence. It would be a broken and futile instrument..."<sup>10</sup>

Cranborne had elucidated a view which had become prevalent among politicians at Westminster as plans for the United Nations organization developed, the focal point of which was the notion that the United Kingdom could not on its own constitute a great power in foreign affairs without the Dominions. The British Commonwealth as a great power had formed the basis for Churchill's vision of "regional councils" for international organization and was also the cornerstone for Beaverbrook's hopes for international civil aviation. Nor did feelings of centralization terminate among high-profile ministers. Paul Emrys-Evans, Parliamentary Undersecretary at the Dominions Office, believed a common policy to be a necessity, but one which would have to wait until after the war, when the Dominions could be more easily convinced to rally for the common cause.<sup>11</sup> One finds it difficult to believe that these men were unaware of the "no commitments" philosophy of Mackenzie King, which the Canadian Prime Minister had stressed at Imperial Conferences in 1923, 1926 and 1937.

Foreign Office opinion, which had really only become aware of the extent of Canadian determination for a separate functionalist voice in the wake of the UNRRA representation issue in the spring of 1943, had by the autumn become reconciled to the general conclusion that the Commonwealth was becoming more decentralized, as the Dominions gained strength and status and pursued more individualistic policies. A change of tactics was required, and at a meeting at the Dominions Office which included some Foreign Office officials on 1 April, it was decided that Britain must refrain from confronting the Dominions with "cut and dried over-ambitious plans" but should work "toward our end according to a preconceived but unexpressed plan by a series of apparently *ad hoc* decisions."<sup>12</sup> Mackenzie King's disquiet was not completely unfounded.

---

10. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 1, copy of speech delivered by Cranborne at the Guildhall in London, 23 November 1943.

11. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U4567/4084/68, Paul Emrys-Evans (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State in the Dominions Office) to Richard Law (Minister of State in the Foreign Office), 16 March 1943.

12. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U1567/310/70, unsigned minute regarding meeting held at Dominions Office on 1 April 1943.

More liberal opinion at Whitehall recognized that "cooperation assumes policy coordination - could best be achieved not through a centralized type of machinery designed to formulate a common policy, but through more frequent and informal contacts between the constituent parts of the Commonwealth on a personal level and through closer collaboration in the field as the Dominion foreign services expanded. As an insightful Foreign Office report concluded, quite differently from Lord Cranborne:

We must in future regard the Dominions not so much as offspring of the Mother Country as fellow members of the United Nations, whose goodwill we already have in large measure and wish to retain on the basis that the more friends we have the better. We must do this because a clear-eyed approach to the question of Commonwealth relations, as opposed to a sentimental one, is necessary if we are not to endanger our relations with English-speaking peoples by becoming resentful either of the behaviour of the Dominions, who are naturally determined to have the best of both worlds, or of the intervention of the United States in Commonwealth affairs. It will help us to do this if we realise that, although the Dominions are very useful to us and we to them, we could still be a Great Power without them...this insistence on flexibility and informality does mean, however, that the family bond which undoubtedly exists and which we should continue to make use of as a fund of goodwill and assistance in international relations cannot be presumed upon and must not be exclusive.<sup>13</sup>

Evidently there were clear differences of opinion among British officials, but the gulf between them was not as large as that separating them from the politicians, who seemed ready to test Dominion waters with bold plans, which could do no political harm at home when publicized.

But the Canadians were guilty of over-reaction as well. Charles Ritchie had managed to secure a copy of the report cited above from the Foreign Office in early February 1944, with the strict assurance that it should only get a very narrow circulation, considering the sensitive climate which followed the Halifax speech. Sympathetic to the Canadian view as the memorandum was, in Ottawa Hume Wrong detected an irksome tendency in it to treat "the Dominions" as an entity and not as four separate countries, each with their own

---

13. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W12262/5467/68, memorandum by J.L. Campbell, "Intra-Imperial Relations: The British Commonwealth", 30 November 1943.



interests and aspirations. Canada, having had a colonial past, for example, did not necessarily mean that it would have vital interests in the colonial questions confronting the Empire.<sup>14</sup> For Lester Pearson, who also read the British report, the idea of closer informal consultation towards common ends could be a debilitating influence on both the British and Dominion governments, and "the fact that it never does occur to them (the British) is one of the best reasons for the rejection of it, because it indicates that the limitation is meant to be pretty one-sided."<sup>15</sup> One should remember, however, that the report was written before Lord Halifax delivered his speech in Toronto, while the Canadian responses came after.

Much like Alfred Deakin, one of his earlier predecessors who in 1907 had proposed an Imperial secretariat, John Curtin, the Labour Prime Minister of Australia, suggested the creation of a standing sub-committee of the Imperial Conference and a secretariat which would formulate agendas for meetings of the prime ministers. Curtin's proposals were ventured in November and December 1943, and were prophetic to a degree in that they called for the meetings of prime ministers, preferably to be held in different Commonwealth capitals, to be the major mode of consultation. In addition, meetings of other ministers with specific portfolios such as finance, trade and communications could be organized. Curtin took great care to emphasize the convergent interests of the Commonwealth with those of the allied nations, did not openly mention Australia's usual concern for a common defence policy, and referred to "Britain" and not to the "British Commonwealth" as one of the great powers.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, the Australian prime minister had in fact included a proposal for a secretariat, something which was not likely to court favour with his Canadian peer. Mackenzie King was instinctively opposed to Curtin's proposals and would address himself to them at the Prime Ministers' Meeting in May 1944.

---

14. Pearson Papers, Pre 1958 Series, vol. 9, file "Commonwealth Relations 1945-48", memorandum from Wrong to Robertson, 7 February 1944.

15. *Ibid.*, Pearson to Wrong, 21 March 1944.

16. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2362, memorandum from Robertson to King, 30 November 1943; also summary of Curtin proposals prepared by John Holmes, 14 December 1943.

On 25 November 1943, Field Marshal Smuts delivered a speech in London entitled "Thoughts on the New World", and in the press, his thoughts, which had been expressed with usual histrionic flair, quickly became proposals. Smuts too, like Curtin, repeatedly stressed the sovereign nature of the Dominions, and his remarks dealing with "the trinity of nations" referred to the United States, Soviet Union and the United Kingdom as the great powers. Again, there was no mention of the British Commonwealth as a great power. Where the South African Prime Minister actually made what amounted to a vague proposal was in his desire to "tidy up" the administration of the Colonial Empire by associating interested Dominions with regional colonial groupings. "In this way," Smuts stated, "you will tighten up your own system, and instead of being two separate systems, the one decentralized and looking after its own affairs, and the other centralized and centered in London, you will have a much more logical and statesmanlike arrangement."<sup>17</sup> Smuts had spoken from jotted general notes and had been then asked to supply a vetted version. His expression "tighten up" confused journalists, or perhaps presented them with the opportunity they required, especially H.V. Hodson of *The Sunday Times* and Geoffrey Crowther of *The Economist*, to publicize their cherished one-voice Commonwealth theory. Smuts had been merely thinking and speaking constructively, and like any good leader, with his country's interests uppermost in his mind. John Holmes, referring perhaps both to his cautious superiors and the rabid British press, thought Smuts had been misinterpreted, and so wrote Hume Wrong: "...at a time when a good deal of serious thinking needs to be done on Commonwealth relations, it seems unfortunate that there is a tendency to lump all reformers into one basket."<sup>18</sup>

Smuts and Curtin, though not extremely vocal, were at least sympathetic to the Canadian functionalist ethos, and at any rate the Canadians, for their own part, were more anxious to receive great power recognition of their newly and firmly articulated policy. For this reason the speech by the United Kingdom ambassador to the United States in Toronto appeared to subvert the functional principle and as

---

17. *The Times*, 3 December 1943.

18. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 1, note from Holmes to Wrong, 8 January 1944.



such struck Canadian policy-makers - thought not all as strongly as the prime minister - as an ominous development. Halifax had been invited to speak in Toronto by Leighton McCarthy, who, in spite of being one of the leading members of the old Canadian school of imperialists, served as Canada's Minister to the United States by virtue of his close friendship with President Roosevelt and his contributions to the coffers of the Liberal Party of Canada. Whether McCarthy influenced the President's conceptions of the Commonwealth, or reinforced his preconceptions, is open to debate.

Unlike Cranborne two months earlier, Halifax was not strident at all; the speech was filled with complimentary references to Mackenzie King and Canada's autonomous status, his strongest remark - in addition to a requisite Imperial rallying cry at the end of the speech - being: "It is an immeasurable gain if on vital issues we can achieve a common foreign policy expressed not by a single voice but by the unison of many."<sup>19</sup> If the many speeches he made during the war are scrutinized, Halifax had only been repeating precisely what he had often said before.

However it was the effect of his speech which mattered most. Although it subsided after a few days, Mackenzie King's anger proved difficult to mollify initially, this being a task which had fallen upon Norman Robertson and Malcolm MacDonald, the British High Commissioner. MacDonald reported to London that to the Canadian prime minister the speech looked like a deliberate design by the United Kingdom to revive imperialism, and also represented a personal attack on King, since Halifax knew full well the prime minister's political position vis-à-vis his opponents and his love for the functional principle. On the other hand, Canadian Conservatives were concerned about the potentialities of the speech as an electoral weapon in Mackenzie King's hands. "All this is very disappointing," MacDonald concluded. "It indicates that Canadian politicians are still capable of moods in which they do not do themselves justice as leaders of a mature democratic nation."<sup>20</sup>

---

19. Halifax, *The American Speeches of the Earl of Halifax* (London, 1947). Address to the Toronto Board of Trade, "The Dominions and the United Kingdom: Independence and Interdependence", 24 January 1944, pp. 275-283.

20. Dominions Office, DO 35/1204, WC 75/9, MacDonald to Cranborne, 27 January 1944.

Mackenzie King's feelings were quickly appreciated though not entirely understood in London, where ironically, there was also a corresponding over-reaction to the speech. At a meeting of the War Cabinet on 31 January 1944, Churchill suggested that the Foreign Secretary should be consulted before public statements were made which were likely to be perceived as pronouncements on important issues of policy. Although the British prime minister did not condemn Halifax, or say that he disagreed with the content of his remarks, he did note that "It seems to me that Lord Halifax ought not to have made this very important speech at Toronto without reference here beforehand. It is in effect an interference in Canadian politics turned markedly against Mackenzie King."<sup>21</sup> Questions of high policy, Churchill stated, would be studied with all prime ministers at the forthcoming meeting in May. Brendan Bracken, the British Minister of Information, had commented at a press conference a few days earlier that the speech solely represented the views of Halifax and "Everything he said, as a matter of fact, was largely hallowed by antiquity, but whether it is the wisest possible thing at the moment to talk in Canada of some form of Imperial Federation is, I think, very much open to question...It is a matter of party politics in Canada."<sup>22</sup> According to British leaders, therefore, the furor occasioned by the speech was primarily political, and not really a question of fundamental disagreement in principle. Even Malcolm MacDonald, a stalwart supporter and confidant of the Canadian prime minister, who himself deplored the use of the phrase "British Commonwealth and Empire", and who in a speech in Montreal a few months later endorsed Mackenzie King's view of separate and indigenous foreign policies, wrote to Lord Cranborne that Canadian cooperation in the Commonwealth - whatever that meant - would be assured if the United Kingdom would not issue statements which would alienate responsible French Canadian opinion or give the impression that the Commonwealth was "ganging up" on the United States. "That was the principal mistake that Edward made in his speech and the only bit of

---

21. Dominions Office, DO 35/1204, WC 75/9, Prime Minister's Personal Minute, 31 January 1944.

22. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 366, cable no. 270, Massey to King, 28 January 1944.



the speech that I personally disagreed with."<sup>23</sup> There still evidently existed some hope in British circles that Canada would "come round".

Once his anger had been replaced by resentment, Mackenzie King was cleverly conciliatory. In a speech to the House of Commons on 31 January, which the Irish High Commissioner in Ottawa claimed had saved the Commonwealth - but did not save Ireland's place in it later - the Prime Minister stated: "We have reached today an effective method of consultation and cooperation that has not been surpassed at any time in the history of the British Empire." He then reflected upon the communiques of various Imperial Conferences which he had attended over the years and focussed upon a very clear sentence in the Balfour Declaration of 1926: "Every self-governing member of the Empire is now the master of its destiny." True world security and freedom from war could not be achieved through great power rivalry, and in addition to collaboration with "a special degree of intimacy" within the Commonwealth, Canada could of necessity not lean towards exclusivity when confronting the issues which would determine peace and war. Halifax, according to King, was an eminent statesman and political philosopher who had merely allowed his mind to review the developments of the past century and projected his thoughts into the future. Unfortunately his speech had come at an inconvenient time and had raised certain issues which should be clarified.<sup>24</sup>

In Washington, Pearson gave his political master full credit for a great speech and added a few thoughts of his own:

If we act as a unit, I do not see how we can also act separately and maintain the national and international position we have gained. We can't have it both ways. Therefore, there is only one way. It is, I think, quite impossible for us, even if we so desired, to reverse the history of the last twenty years. The Prime Minister was,

---

23. Dominions Office, DO 35/1204, WC 75/9, MacDonald to Cranborne, 12 February 1944.

24. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 31 January 1944, pp. 36-42. In a note which he sent to MacDonald, Halifax stated that he had in mind Cranborne's speech of 23 November 1943 and a speech by Brooke Claxton on 9 July 1943, the day the functional principle was formally announced. "I deliberately rejected the idea of a 'single voice' to which Claxton referred...I do not readily appreciate in what way the speech itself, if read as a whole, can be used to support the doctrines that would be as unpalatable to myself as I imagine to the Prime Minister." Halifax had given McCarthy a copy of the note. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 344, McCarthy to King, 1 February 1944.

in my opinion, absolutely right when he deprecated this talk of a British Commonwealth unit in foreign affairs; talks based on views held, I'm afraid, in pretty high quarters, in the White House, in No. 10. Acting in unison as separate states is one thing; acting as a unit is quite another...<sup>25</sup>

Press comment in the United States on the "Halifax affair" was lacklustre; in the other Dominions it ranged from indifference to support of Mackenzie King's position; and in the United Kingdom, there tended to be somewhat more hostility from the predictable sources, *The Sunday Times* and *The Economist*. For King, in spite of his *leitmotif* of national unity at all costs, there was never any discernible political danger. The wily politician in him had taken over, and he readily exploited the emotions raised by the affair. He outflanked the Opposition by using answers to questions on the Commonwealth given by John Bracken, the Conservative leader, who did not have a seat in the House of Commons, in an interview with *Maclean's* magazine. When the Conservatives rallied in the House of Commons to attack King's remarks, the Prime Minister simply told the members they were being inconsistent, since they were criticizing the very words of their own leader.<sup>26</sup>

Was there a motive behind the Halifax speech? Was it a British *ballon d'essai* designed to test Dominion reactions when the international presence of these countries was on the ascendant, or even an oblique British attempt to indicate discomfort to Australia

---

25. DEA file 7-V(s), Pearson to Robertson, 1 February 1944.

26. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2352, copy of *Maclean's* interview with John Bracken, 1 May 1944. Bracken had said "I do not favour the establishment of any permanent agency which would unduly centralize the influence or increase the rigidity of the Commonwealth structure. Such conferences as are held should be advisory and consultative and their findings should not be binding unless approved by Parliament." In London, Charles Ritchie had engaged in a forceful conversation with Geoffrey Crowther of *The Economist*, who in a leader of 5 February 1944, had stated that if Canada was not pleased with closer Commonwealth integration, she should contract out of the Commonwealth. Ritchie had replied that Canada would never do this, and received a compliment from the Prime Minister for his forthrightness. As for Crowther, King was not averse to minuting "the man is an ass" in the margin of Ritchie's letter. Ritchie to Wrong, 9 March 1944.



and New Zealand at their hurriedly drafted mutual ANZAC Agreement of 1 January 1944? Perhaps Halifax was only guilty of harbouring meandering aristocratic thoughts of an earlier era, all too symptomatic of an Empire under duress and in decline.<sup>27</sup> There is no ready answer since the concept of a common policy always remained nebulous and confused. Halifax had advocated a common foreign policy through the unison of many voices; King had more or less argued that acting in unison was different from acting as a unit. On the surface, there appeared to be little difference in the perspectives of both men, other than the obvious attitudinal one of clinging to power and status in the one case, and acquiring it in the other. If a unitary Commonwealth policy was perceived by the British to be both politically and strategically organized, then there is more credibility in accepting the "testing the Dominions" theory, since Cranborne would propose plans for a Commonwealth defence policy at the Prime Ministers' Meeting in May 1944. Conversely, as was more probably the case at this time, a common policy was meant to become more of a "British Commonwealth" political entity, with defence falling under a separate agreement, then Halifax, Cranborne, Beaverbrook and Churchill were probably swimming against the tide of the new world order, embodied in the plans being developed by their own officials for discussion at the conference tables of Dumbarton Oaks later in the year. The existing state of affairs was amply demonstrated to Churchill a few months later when his regional councils scheme was soundly rejected by the prime ministers.

A "single voice" Commonwealth policy could simply not function for four Dominions with so many diverse policy interests. Moreover, Dominion leaders did not really comprehend the domestic political fabric of their individual countries when it came to Commonwealth policies. For example, Herbert Evatt, the Australian Minister of External Affairs, told Mackenzie King that the latter's decisive

---

27. Canadian interview subjects who were asked questions about a motive all believed that Halifax was merely reflecting ideas which were current at the time. Lord Garner has commented that he and Malcolm MacDonald had disagreed on this point, MacDonald having perceived the speech as more of an opinion-gathering device. Interview with Lord Garner, 8 November 1979.

electoral victory of June 1945 would be perceived throughout Canada as a gigantic "slap" at Halifax. King was so perplexed by Evatt's remark that he wondered how the capital of Nova Scotia could possibly have become an election issue.<sup>28</sup> The Halifax speech may have given the denizens of the East Block much to consider, but there certainly was not a domestic political aftertaste.

The discussion of Curtin's proposals at the Prime Ministers' Meeting in London in May 1944 was anticlimactic. References to a unitary Commonwealth policy were muted, probably as a result of the immediate aftermath of the Halifax speech and of MacDonald's soothing despatches from Ottawa:

If we allow matters to develop in practice, without making challenging speeches on the theory of Empire unity or seeking abruptly to create new formal machinery for achieving it, Canada will undoubtedly become an increasingly co-operative and useful partner in the Commonwealth. By that method, Mr. Mackenzie King himself can be 'brought along'.<sup>29</sup>

Also, there were more important and certainly more concrete issues worthy of discussion. Numerous meetings were devoted to the military conduct of the war, although these were more characteristic of briefing sessions than consultative discussions. Perhaps the most fruitful talks were those concerning the proposed world security organization, where it became clear that in spite of all fears, the Foreign Office had not planned for a "British Commonwealth and Empire" seat on the proposed Security Council. Predictably, as in his speech to the Canadian House of Commons, Mackenzie King expressed his satisfaction with the current structure and function of the British Commonwealth, and when Cranborne brought forward proposals for Commonwealth defence, the Canadian Prime Minister responded in the non-committal fashion which was by now wholly expected of him in Commonwealth circles: the proposals were interesting, would merit further study, but of course he was in no position to commit the Canadian Government without engaging in prior consultation with his Cabinet colleagues. Pragmatic as the Australian scheme was, it was for this

---

28. King Diary, 13 June 1945.

29. Dominions Office, DO 35/1489, WC 75/35, memorandum by Malcolm MacDonald, "Imperial Co-operation", 11 March 1944.



reason too that Curtin's proposals were relegated to become almost a footnote to the proceedings, before being dismissed altogether as another one of many imaginative plans for what was increasingly becoming an undefineable association.

Mackenzie King repeated his message to those who needed to hear and heed it most - the politicians at Westminster. Having been asked to address the Houses of Parliament, King argued that Commonwealth unity could only be maintained by basing it upon principles which could be accepted by all nations, and stated:

We cannot be too careful to see that, to our own peoples, the new methods will not appear as an attempt to limit their freedom of decision or, to peoples outside the Commonwealth, as an attempt to establish a separate bloc. Let us beware lest in changing the form, we lose the substance; or, for appearance's sake, sacrifice reality. I am told that, somewhere, over the grave of one who did not know when he was well off, there is the following epitaph: 'I was well; I wanted to be better; and here I am'.<sup>30</sup>

During the Prime Ministers' Meeting, King and his officials were shown a considerable amount of Foreign Office print from missions abroad, particularly from the British embassy in Washington. Halifax and his staff in their despatches stressed that if Commonwealth solidarity was presented with emphasis on Imperial preference or on exclusivity of any kind, American willingness to consider plans for international political or economic cooperation would suffer. Robertson was encouraged by this "sensible appreciation" of the Canadian position.<sup>31</sup> Although Halifax himself, like many others, still hankered for Commonwealth agreement on major lines of policy which would still allow members to "adapt their tactics to the needs of changing circumstances", he went much further in suggesting that the term "Dominion" would probably fall into desuetude and that in terms of the order of precedence, the senior representative of His Majesty in a nation's capital would not always be the representative of the United Kingdom.<sup>32</sup> Perhaps Halifax too was slowly "coming round".

---

30. DEA file 6133-40, vol. 2, copy of Mackenzie King's speech at Westminster, 12 May 1944.

31. DEA file 62(s), Robertson to Wrong, 10 May 1944.

32. Dominions Office, DO 35/1204, W6458/1103/68, despatch no. 379, Halifax to Eden, 14 April 1944. The despatch was later printed for confidential circulation as a memorandum.

The notion of the British Commonwealth as a great power in international politics did not readily fade away in functional areas of interest either. For example, the delegation of the United Kingdom to the International Labour Conference at Philadelphia in the spring of 1944 was referred to in the official records of the meeting as the delegation of the "British Empire", which, as Mackenzie King pointed out, was a League anomaly which had been changed in 1927.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, Hume Wrong believed that the meeting of the prime ministers in May had if anything strengthened beliefs in the United Kingdom of the merits of a unitary Commonwealth policy, since in a debate at Westminster near the end of the month, every participant, including Churchill and Eden, spoke of the British Commonwealth as a great power. "All the speakers appeared to believe," Wrong concluded, "that the Commonwealth would simultaneously and automatically go to war as a whole."<sup>34</sup> Canadian fears were somewhat allayed when Attlee's Labour Party came to power in 1945, but with them too there was often some cause for concern, particularly during the financial crisis in the autumn of 1947, when Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin advocated an Imperial Customs Union. On that occasion, Pearson observed that "There is a real danger of dramatic perfervid utterances in London making much more difficult here an already difficult situation. Between the dehydration of Mr. Attlee and the geysers of Mr. Bevin, I prefer the former."<sup>35</sup>

Ironically and perhaps not surprisingly, it was not until the emergence of independent Asian members within the Commonwealth that the rhetoric of British politicians was succeeded by semblances of realism. Ironically, and not surprisingly, more realistic attitudes prevailed in the far-flung corners of the Commonwealth, as John Curtin's report to his parliament on the 1944 Prime Ministers' Meeting indicated:

---

33. DEA file 6065-40, despatch no. 707, King to Massey, 7 June 1944.

34. DEA file 62(s), memorandum from Wrong to Robertson, 26 June 1944.

35. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 68, file D-12-5, Pearson to Robertson, 8 September 1947.



I do not seek to convert my friend, Mr. Mackenzie King, to my point of view any more than I can accept, from the Australian point of view, his opinion that the present means of co-operation has worked with complete success. A pre-eminent characteristic of the British Commonwealth is its diversity within the framework of its unity.<sup>36</sup>

\* \* \*

In the 1940s, Commonwealth consultation presented a curious dichotomy: it allowed Canada and the other Dominions to be informed and to an extent influence United Kingdom policy decisions, and in turn by following the mother country's lead, learn how to engage in diplomatic intercourse with others; yet on the other hand, consultation often appeared to reinforce the concept of a unitary Commonwealth policy. Consultation had developed along a variety of lines: the Imperial Conferences, which in the 1940s were termed Prime Ministers' Meetings; telegraphic contact between the prime ministers, handled through the Dominions Office which had been established in 1925 and the respective Departments of External Affairs; the High Commissioners *in situ* in the Commonwealth capitals; and, becoming more prominent as air transport evolved, the numerous interchange of visits of ministers and officials. The process had become looser, through practice almost completely non-binding and certainly less one-sided. For the purposes of this discussion, the evolution and nature of consultative procedure will be largely ignored, its significance having been more than adequately examined in other works.<sup>37</sup> Instead, it may prove more useful to study briefly the less visible but for Canada more valuable dimension of Commonwealth consultation, that represented by attitudes toward consultation within the bureaucracy at Whitehall, and by the role of the High Commissioner in London and in Ottawa, as well as other representatives in the field.

---

36. War Cabinet (U.K.), CAB 66, WP(44)510, memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (Cranborne), 9 September 1944. Curtin made the speech on 17 July 1944.

37. See, for example, Keith Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs; Problems of Nationality, 1918-1938* (London, 1937); Nicholas Mansergh, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs; Problems of Wartime Cooperation and Post-War Change, 1939-1952* (London, 1958); and Mansergh, *The Commonwealth Experience* (London, 1969). For an approach which makes use of both British and Canadian documentary records, see Philip G. Wigley, *Canada and the Transition to Commonwealth; British-Canadian Relations, 1917-1928* (London, 1977).

The role and status of the High Commissioner was not clearly defined in the 1940s, and indeed his consultative role was never adequately explained. Mackenzie King had always been exceedingly cautious - for the usual reasons - in allowing the Canadian High Commissioner in London to consult with the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs and other Cabinet ministers. In a 1929 letter to Leopold Amery, then Dominions Secretary, King had been blunt, his language noticeably Skeltonian:

First of all, these conferences are either official or they are not. If they are not, they are unnecessary and should be avoided...If they are official, it would then appear that by continuing to countenance them, our Government would be helping to build up in London, in conjunction with the Secretary of State for the Dominions, a sort of Cabinet...the members of which will have had from their Governments no instructions of any kind and with respect to the doings of which their Governments, in the nature of things will have little or no knowledge.<sup>38</sup>

Clearly, the Canadian Prime Minister perceived the role of the High Commissioner to be more of a representative than an interlocutor - with information continually being exchanged on the established channel of prime minister to prime minister - and as Canada's representative he "should hold a position corresponding in dignity, importance and status to that of the Ambassadors or Ministers who represent Foreign States."<sup>39</sup> When in 1936, Malcolm MacDonald, then Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, suggested similar meetings without minutes being taken, King's response was again unequivocal. The practical gains of regular meetings between the High Commissioner and the Dominions Secretary would be problematic and unhelpful inferences drawn abroad so certain, that: "it must be concluded there is no compelling case for improvising additions to the structure of the established procedure."<sup>40</sup> When a crisis atmosphere developed following the coup d'état in Czechoslovakia in the spring of 1939 and Vincent Massey attended meetings between the High Commissioners

---

38. DEA file 50020-40, King to Amery, 22 March 1927; in response to Amery to King, 24 December 1926.

39. *Ibid.*

40. DEA file 50020-40, King to MacDonald, 16 June 1936; in response to MacDonald to King, 21 May 1936.



and the Dominions Secretary, King politely but firmly reprimanded him and instructed him to meet with the Dominions Secretary, Sir Thomas Inskip, on his own.<sup>41</sup> Massey could then only receive general information in this fashion, but when details and commitments were involved, conventional channels were the rule. In addition, Massey laboured under the weight of the personal distrust the Prime Minister had of him, King's assumption being that the High Commissioner's fondness for fraternizing with British aristocracy automatically tainted him as an imperialist.

Yet during the war, a practice emerged of having High Commissioners' meetings on a daily basis, and Massey, like his peers, was in constant attendance. Although Massey made numerous valuable contributions to these discussions, he was often frustrated because he did not receive as much information as S.M. Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner, who in effect had British War Cabinet status. MacDonald, himself now British High Commissioner in Ottawa, upon reflecting on the way daily meetings had simply emerged, noted in a 1944 memorandum that "I am certain that if this child's birth had been publicly announced some years ago, it would have been still-born."<sup>42</sup> Although Mackenzie King still entertained suspicions of possible commitments arising from the daily meetings, he referred to them in his parliamentary reply to the Halifax speech as a proven and valuable means of consultation. King had even agreed to a suggestion by Curtin at the May 1944 Prime Ministers' Meeting to have the High Commissioners meet with the United Kingdom Prime Minister on a monthly basis. Having demolished Curtin's proposals for a secretariat, King could afford to be expansive and conciliatory, especially since neither Churchill nor Smuts were in attendance at the time.<sup>43</sup> Mackenzie King also realized that the nature of the war made numerous meetings inevitable, and Canada had a vested interest in being informed, especially on the state of Anglo-American relations. During this period, the Americans were reluctant to share

---

41. DEA file 50020-40, King to Massey, 23 March 1939.

42. Dominions Office, DO 35/1489, WC 75/35, memorandum by Malcolm MacDonald, "Imperial Co-operation", 11 March 1944.

43. Dominions Office, DO 35/1490, WC 75/37, memorandum from Sir Edward Bridges (Secretary to the War Cabinet) to Churchill, 17 May 1944.

too many documents with the Canadians, so the consultative link with the United Kingdom, in spite of occasionally audible remonstrances, had to remain strong. Paradoxically, it was precisely close consultation with the United Kingdom which inhibited any possible American overtures for closer consultation in Washington.

A unique situation arose when the British government changed from Conservative to Labour in 1945. Labour parties were also in power in Australia and New Zealand and fraternal links between the parties in the three countries blossomed, no doubt encouraged by Michael Foot's sympathetic articles in the *Daily Herald* concerning the Antipodean positions at the San Francisco Conference, and Denis Healey's work in the party's international research bureau at Transport House. Australia in particular had expressed great interest in the peace settlement in the Pacific, and therefore desired closer and more formalized consultation, something which Canada of course did not wish at any cost. In order to appease the Australians, Lord Addison, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs in the new government, told the House of Lords in October 1945 that the policy of daily consultation with the High Commissioners, which had been the rule under his predecessor Cranborne, would be continued. Addison was guilty of a white lie, since both the Canadian and New Zealand High Commissioners were absent on home leave, and with Evatt's presence in London at the time, the Australian situation was, to put it mildly, irregular.<sup>44</sup> In over-reacting to the issue, Mackenzie King perhaps unwisely turned down an opportunity for Canada to exercise some influence by refusing to sanction his High Commissioner or a representative attending briefing sessions concerning meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers which were to consider the peace settlements. British officials had sensed - quite correctly as it later turned out - that Dominion opinions would not carry much weight at the general peace conference at Paris. Ironically, King had believed that Canada should deserve separate representation on the Council<sup>45</sup> and had forgotten the cardinal rule of

---

44. DEA file 50020-40, Frederic Hudd (Canadian Deputy High Commissioner) to Hume Wrong, 27 October 1945; also Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W9595/3523/68, minute by J.D. Greenway, 1 July 1943. Evatt did not get along well with Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner and a former Prime Minister.

45. King Diary, 28 August 1945.



Dumbarton Oaks - that Canada could not aspire so high as to be in the company of the great powers, but could, if the need arose, secure changes through close consultation with a sympathetic British delegation. Meetings of the High Commissioners in London continued, but only on an *ad hoc* basis.

Mackenzie King must have heaved a sigh of relief when Norman Robertson succeeded the unlucky Vincent Massey in the autumn of 1946. Robertson was to share the temper of the Prime Minister when it came to the question of regularized meetings of the High Commissioners. Robertson had been out-manoeuvred by J.A. Beasley, the Australian High Commissioner, who in early 1947 had apparently secured general agreement for regular meetings. On this occasion, the Canadian instructions came not from the Prime Minister but from Under-Secretary Lester Pearson: "It is felt that great caution should be exercised in this matter and that there should be no developments which would give the impression that a Cabinet of High Commissioners was being established, or any unnecessary institutional machinery."<sup>46</sup> Nothing came of the Australian initiative. When Lord Addison retired from his position at what had become the Commonwealth Relations Office in October 1947 in order to devote more of his energy to his role as government leader in the upper house, he was replaced by Philip Noel-Baker, who, through a combination of his "ardour of innocence" and a request from the South African High Commissioner again threw open the subject of frequent and regular meetings of Dominion representatives. Robertson reminded Noel-Baker that Addison's previous ready enthusiasm for scheduled consultation had "soon petered out from inanition."<sup>47</sup> Rumours and rhetoric effectively came to an end in December 1947 when the High Commissioners from the new Dominions of India, Pakistan and Ceylon were invited to the *ad hoc* meetings. Governing political considerations, particularly the dangerously widening gulf between East and West, necessitated an inevitable degree of differentiation, even within the meetings of the High Commissioners. Indeed, Robertson received messages from the Foreign Office implying that he would not miss much if he failed to attend certain meetings. Foreign Secretary

---

46. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 428, cable no. 341, Pearson to Robertson, 28 February 1947.

47. DEA file 50020-40, Robertson to Pearson, 13 November 1947.

Bevin would however be available following the meeting to discuss policy issues with the Canadian High Commissioner, and if this was inconvenient, Robertson could simply turn up at the Foreign Office for consultations the following day. The Canadians were also in favour of smaller gatherings. Constantly fearful about the effect of dreaded leaks on a domestic public opinion which was assumed to be more volatile than it was, Canada objected to having items from the agenda of the United Nations discussed on grounds of security.<sup>48</sup> The emergence of the new Commonwealth therefore quelled in practice any residual tendencies to develop what would appear to be a formal consultative body of High Commissioners in London.

In Whitehall, Commonwealth affairs came under the purview of the Dominions Office, a department which often fought allegations from the Foreign and War Offices that it was little more than a glorified post office. As demonstrated in earlier chapters, as international institutions were created, Foreign Office interest in the rules and the opinions of the Dominions grew, but with some corresponding impatience. Although generally recognized that "full and constant consultation" - perhaps for the Foreign Office by now a euphemism for information transfers - with the Dominions was absolutely essential if the United Kingdom wished to succeed in maintaining the British Commonwealth as a key element of its foreign policy, there were frequent murmurs of discontent in the Foreign Office over the practical problems involved in Dominion consultation when policy decisions had to be hurriedly taken and over what was perceived to be an overly old-fashioned and avuncular attitude exhibited by the Dominions Office. According to Gladwyn Jebb, the threat of the foreign Office becoming "muscle-bound" as a result was a constant danger. "Generally speaking," he informed Sir Alexander Cadogan in May 1943, "I have the slight impression that the Dominions Office are on some occasions more royalist than the King and so sensitive of Dominion opinion that they hardly welcome any expression of views by His Majes-

---

48. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2105, file AR 405/1/4-20, vol. 1, cable from Robertson to Pearson, 16 July 1948.



ty's Government at all."<sup>49</sup> In practice, the timing of consultation was deemed to be more vital than its continuity. For example, did Dominion silence on an issue on which information had been distributed, indicate approval, disquiet, acquiescence or lack of interest in the policy line taken? Why bother with consultation at all when Dominion unanimity was impossible to achieve?

In order to both ease the growing consultative burden borne by the Dominions Office and to protect Foreign Office interests, a Dominions Intelligence Department was formed within the Foreign Office in 1942. Essentially, the Department provided a valuable service to the Dominions in allowing the High Commissions access to all Foreign Office political summary telegrams, and served as a direct conduit for more secret information which the High Commissions could pass on to their governments. The general rule was that the Dominions Office should assume responsibility for communicating official policy to the High Commissioners, while the Dominions Intelligence Department would supply "informal guidance" and factual information directly to the High Commissions. Vincent Massey quite rightly identified the new system as one which would broaden and not duplicate consultation, and for the most part, this was indeed the case.<sup>50</sup>

But where the Dominions Intelligence Department appeared to be the ideal mechanism in theory, in practice there were numerous limitations to its efficiency. Contacts between the High Commissions and the Department were at a relatively junior level, and the more secret documents were not discussed. Telegrams and despatches read during the war at the daily High Commissioners' meetings were usually of a more classified nature, but their content was imparted hurriedly, and in spite of Cranborne's entreaties for greater circulation of more

---

49. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W8107/4084/68, minute from Jebb to Cadogan, 31 May 1943; also office circular no. 14, "Consultation with Dominion Governments", 31 May 1943. As an example, Jebb cited the UNRRA episode and stated that Canada had backed down from its rigid position while the Dominions Office had prophesied doom.

50. Pearson Papers, Pre 1948 Series, vol. 1, Massey to Pearson, 4 March 1942; also FO 371 Series, W4373/4084/68, memorandum, "The Dominion Work of the Dominions Intelligence Department", 13 January 1943.

secret telegrams to the High Commissioners - all "responsible and discreet" men - Churchill, who was obsessed with security, refused to soften his position to allow wider circulation.<sup>51</sup> Further, Sir Basil Newton, a senior diplomat who had to be given a position somewhere before his impending retirement, was charged with the supervision of the Dominions Intelligence Department. He had no real practical knowledge of the concerns of the Dominions, having, like his entire staff, never served in a Dominion. Upon different occasions, Newton ventured schemes for a "Dominions Corner" at the Foreign Office, where it was envisaged that Dominions' representatives could sit and consult with British officials and each other in agreeable surroundings perhaps quaintly reminiscent of an earlier age. Newton went so far as to actually attempt to create a separate reporting network in the Dominion capitals, a move which provoked the ire of Dominions Office officials, since political reporting in Commonwealth capitals was already very capably carried out by Dominions Office officers abroad. In Ottawa, for example, the Foreign Office member of the High Commission was of very junior rank, and was responsible for coordinating the bomber transport run across the Atlantic, not for frequent consultation with East Block officials.<sup>52</sup> Newton's system survived only one series of despatches from Commonwealth capitals, thereby demonstrating yet again the chief problem confronting the Foreign Office in its dealings with the Dominions: unfamiliarity and impatience.

When it came to outright disagreement with a Dominion over a question of high policy, the Foreign Office was more prone to exhibit

---

51. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W16621/15409/68, Cranborne to Eden, 16 November 1944; Churchill to Eden, 21 January 1945.

52. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W12539/4084/68, Allan Maitland (of the U.K. High Commission in Ottawa) to J.D. Greenway (of the Dominions Intelligence Department, Foreign Office), 19 August 1943. When Maitland's single report, which concerned itself mainly with the activities of John Grierson and the National Film Board, did not come up to expectations, Newton suggested that he be replaced. W16485/4084/68, minute by Sir Basil Newton, 4 November 1943. Lord Garner has stated that the Dominions Intelligence Department did much to aggravate the tension which already existed between the Foreign and Dominion Offices. Interview with Lord Garner, 8 November 1979.



intolerance than the Dominions Office. This was particularly evident in Canada's fight for recognition of the functional principle in its initial stages, when one Foreign Office official dryly observed that "the Dominions have not yet realized the grave responsibilities which membership in the British Commonwealth of Nations implies."<sup>53</sup> The passage of time and a change of government in the United Kingdom did not do much to change prevailing attitudes of impatience within the Foreign Office when there was a need for quick policy decisions. As late as March 1947, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin had upon the advice of his officials suggested a review of consultative procedures, since it was found too difficult to accept the necessity of consultation when events were moving too quickly. The Permanent Under-Secretary in the Dominions Office, Sir Eric Machtig, in turn argued the feelings of his Department, which was that the Dominions should be brought into consultations at an earlier stage in policy development. The Foreign Office then conceded that the best thing to do would be to send a circular memorandum around the department reminding everyone to keep the welfare of the Dominions in mind in their work and to observe the effects of this memorandum before any further measures were taken.<sup>54</sup> Such circulars merely served as placebos and did little to change long-standing views.

Although the Dominions Office was at times perceived by both the Foreign Office and the Dominions themselves as being somewhat over-protective of Dominion interests - which were at any rate not always uniform - it exhibited a greater propensity to accept and even encourage the evolution of the Commonwealth along lines preferable to Canada. Frequently, attitudinal changes were more a product of mis-sives originating from British High Commissions abroad than from the Whitehall "think-tank." In this sense, Malcolm MacDonald's position as High Commissioner to Canada assumed special significance. MacDonald

---

53. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, U1677/70, minute by J.D. Greenway, 12 April 1943.

54. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W2552/1011/68, Bevin to Addison, 20 March 1947; also W2803/1011/68, Sir Eric Machtig to Sir Orme Sargent (Deputy Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office), 11 April 1947; Sargent to Machtig, 21 April 1947. Bevin had been angry over Evatt's complaint at British failure to consult Australia regarding the signing of the Anglo-French Alliance.

had the trust and confidence of Mackenzie King - which is more than Massey ever enjoyed - and this, coupled with his personal friendship with both Robertson and Heeney, allowed him great familiarity with both the making and the makers of Canadian foreign policy. Although relations with Sir Alexander Clutterbuck, who succeeded MacDonald in 1946, would be very cordial, they would not attain the same level of intimacy.

Consistently, MacDonald's despatches were filled with references to the great abilities of Canadian ministers and officials, which related to the assertion made by the High Commissioner "that Canada has 'grown-up' in the last few years, despite all her internal difficulties, she has found herself." Observing also that Canada was "hyperconscious" of its status as a free nation, MacDonald noted that Canadian officials were ever-vigilant lest the association with the United Kingdom appear to others as not free but slavish. Britain had greatly under-rated Canada's quality in the past and had to be cognizant of the sensitivity of Canadian feelings regarding American opinion and temperament. Perhaps idealistically, and in that much like the Canadians themselves, MacDonald believed that Canada could act as a bridge between the United Kingdom and the United States since Canada was a nation with "deep-set British traditions living in an essentially North American environment."<sup>55</sup> MacDonald's optimism was somewhat premature. By late 1945, however, MacDonald had not changed any of his views demonstrably, and although he did not doubt there was a tendency within Canada to exaggerate things, Canada's position in the world was nonetheless growing in importance. Furthermore, continued good relations between Britain and Canada were essential to the continued well-being of the Commonwealth, and therefore to the maintenance of the United Kingdom's position in the world.<sup>56</sup>

Undoubtedly the weight of MacDonald's views, together with those of Stephen Holmes, a similarly inclined official of the Dominions

---

55. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W4917/2990/68, memorandum by MacDonald, "The Post-War Position of the British Commonwealth of Nations", 23 February 1943.

56. Dominions Office, DO 35/1487, WC 75/22, memorandum by MacDonald, "United Kingdom Representation in Canada after the War; Relations between Britain and Canada", 6 November 1945.



Office who in 1943 had been appointed counsellor at the British embassy in Washington in recognition of a strong Dominion presence in the American capital, helped to both mould opinion and avoid bureaucratic pratfalls at Whitehall. The despatches and memoranda forwarded by the two men, printed and widely circulated through both the Foreign and Dominion Offices and often passed on to the War Cabinet, obviated the need for any policy-formulating function for the Dominions Intelligence Department. Whereas MacDonald and Holmes had both written of the need to treat Canada as an equal which was rapidly developing into a recognized power in its own right, the Dominions Intelligence Department in mid 1944 still toyed with anachronistic schemes of personnel exchanges between the various Departments of External Affairs and the Foreign Office for training purposes. Sir Eric Machtig, who correctly perceived this plan as one which would provoke cries of "centralization" from Canada and from his own Dominions Office, praised the theoretical intent of the scheme, but diplomatically concluded that its implementation was another matter altogether, and that the proposal "rather goes off the rails."<sup>57</sup>

In order to meet the needs of what was clearly becoming a more expansive and complex Commonwealth relationship, the bureaucracy in London changed following the war. There had been some speculation during 1945 that the Dominions Office would be merged with the Colonial Office, a view which Hume Wrong and his disciples did not share, believing instead that a merger between the Dominion and Foreign Offices would be a more logical recourse since it "would make the real nature of the Dominions Office more obvious without at the same time losing for us some of the advantages which the Dominions Office provides."<sup>58</sup> As it happened, the Dominions Office became the Commonwealth Relations Office in mid-1947, and as such also absorbed the India and Burma Offices. The office of the new Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations now occupied the same

---

57. Dominions Office, DO 35/1204, WX 75/39, minute by Machtig, 4 May 1944 on Foreign Office memorandum "Programme of Contributions from the Foreign Office towards Commonwealth Collaboration", April 1944, (W5904/1103/68).

58. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, John Holmes to Hume Wrong, 31 October 1945.

chambers where Joseph Chamberlain had planned the Boer War and Winston Churchill had made decisions about Palestine in 1922 - hardly an historical atmosphere which inspired optimism, according to Frederic Hudd, second-in-command at Canada House.<sup>59</sup> An Official Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Relations was also brought into being by July 1947, more or less because of the imminent independence of India and Burma. The expansion of Commonwealth membership was not the committee's sole concern, as consideration was given to the question of the status of High Commissioners and ambassadors,<sup>60</sup> equality in their order of precedence not being achieved until late 1948. The Dominions Intelligence Department had also become the Commonwealth Liaison Department and with the change in name had also come a change of intent: instead of solely keeping other parts of the Commonwealth informed of United Kingdom policy, the Department was now to concentrate as much on keeping the Foreign Office posted on Commonwealth affairs. In addition, Sir Basil Newton had retired and had been replaced by Frank Ashton-Gwatkin, a former inspector of British missions abroad, and a strong advocate of Foreign Office reform.<sup>61</sup>

Mackenzie King, though constantly suspicious of British designs at this time, must have observed the changes with something of an approving eye. When it came to nomenclature, King preferred the use of the term "Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs", since it appeared to indicate more clearly the nature of the office and for the entirely predictable reason that "It has been our experience that the term 'Dominions' as applied to some members of the Commonwealth tends to be misinterpreted here and abroad."<sup>62</sup>

---

59. DEA file 5617-40, Hudd to Robertson, 15 October 1947. Robertson was in Ottawa at the time to assist in financial discussions.

60. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W4995/4414/68, Minutes of the First Meeting of the Official Cabinet Committee on Commonwealth Relations, 4 July 1947.

61. DEA file 5617-40, Holmes to Pearson, 16 July 1947.

62. *Ibid.*, cable from King to Attlee, 14 June 1947. Fraser of New Zealand favoured "relations", Smuts preferred "affairs", and Chifley of Australia thought the question should be discussed at a Commonwealth conference at Canberra at the end of August. Cable from Addison to St. Laurent, 23 June 1947.



With the growing Dominion presence in foreign capitals, consultative development was characterized by a paradox not unlike the one mentioned in the context of a common policy: consultation with United Kingdom representatives in foreign capitals was beneficial to Canada, but too much could lead the host country to entertain a distorted view of the relationship. Of greatest value were the fortnightly meetings at the British embassy in Washington which had developed during the war. Presided over by the United Kingdom ambassador, the gatherings were attended by the Dominion heads of mission, the Chiefs of the British Joint Staff Mission, and by representatives of special branches of the British embassy, such as food and finance. Another series of fortnightly meetings were held in turn in the chanceries of the Commonwealth missions, where the second-in-command usually attended what was invariably an informal and wide-ranging discussion of global issues and domestic developments in each of the Commonwealth countries. Pearson acknowledged, as had Wrong earlier in the decade, that the combination of a high turnover of officials and the wide-ranging course of discussions made the major meetings at the British embassy exceedingly difficult to record for transmission to the East Block in Ottawa. Although concerned about security at these large meetings, Pearson valued much of the secret military information which was offered, but despaired when it seemed that the meetings too often became "grouse sessions about the inefficiency of the Americans."<sup>63</sup> One is led to conclude that the meetings served more as a barometer on the nature of British reaction to American policy trends and less as a forum for the Dominions to express concerns which had already been communicated to the British through the usual channels. In the Canadian case, however, when issues arose which were perceived by Ottawa as being more trilateral in nature, such as relief and international civil aviation, good use was made of the Commonwealth representatives'

---

63. Pearson Diary, 17 April 1943; also Wrong Papers, vol. 3, file 22, Pearson to Robertson, 17 March 1945: "I do not like the critical and suspicious atmosphere that seems to be increasing at these meetings. British officials give me the impression that they are finding it more and more difficult to be patient in the face of what they consider to be unjust criticisms and attacks, and less willing to admit that these may not always be as unjust as they think."

meetings to restate and circulate the Canadian position.<sup>64</sup> Care was also always taken to prevent the Americans from interpreting the meetings as common policy-making sessions.

Where there was more Canadian nervousness about meetings with the British in the United States, particularly during 1943, was in relation to the establishment of the first functional organizations, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), and the Interim Committee on Food and Agriculture. Particularly anxious about prejudicing the position taken in regard to independent membership on the Central Committee of UNRRA, Canada, with its fellow Dominions, uneasily agreed to attend meetings suggested by the United Kingdom delegation at the food and agriculture conference held at Hot Springs, Virginia in May 1943. A case in point illustrated the dilemma: the British delegation, eager to have a Commonwealth party to celebrate Empire Day, quickly discovered that the four Dominions could not agree among themselves whether to attend. On the final day of the conference, the United Kingdom gave a party for its own members and informally invited the Dominions to attend, which they did, without any apparent scruples. As one member of the Dominions Intelligence Department summed up the situation in London: "The Dominions will only co-operate if they are not formally bound to do so...they prefer us to give the party and pay for the drinks. They then feel free to come or not as they like, and to damn us heartily afterwards."<sup>65</sup> Hot Springs had in fact been the first international conference for the new world order, and fortunately for all concerned, Commonwealth conference consultation had largely left pettiness behind by the time of the Dumbarton Oaks meetings in 1944, where meetings of the non-participating Dominions with British representatives were a necessity and greater issues were at stake.

---

64. DEA file 51-C(s), despatch no. 2105, Pearson to King, 11 September 1943. Pearson took advantage of Churchill's presence at the meeting to bring up the topic of international civil aviation.

65. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W11982/4567/68, unsigned minute, 21 June 1943. Another anonymous view: "My definite impression is that the Canadians, who were noticeably more grown up than the other Dominion representatives, definitely thought that the Australians and others were being rather childish...I do feel - I may be wrong - that the younger Canadians are getting beyond the schoolboy stage."



In Moscow, a similar system operated as in Washington with meetings being held every second Saturday morning at the British embassy. Because of the paucity of evidence on practically all issues within the Soviet Union, it was a sensible idea to compare what one had with others, and where so much reporting was based upon speculation, to share one's findings and opinions with those of other parties, including the United States. The British and Americans were also often recipients of information from the Canadians, as Dana Wilgress' expertise as ambassador with fluency in Russian and a career which had started as a youthful Canadian trade representative in Russia during the Great War was universally appreciated. The Commonwealth meetings continued after the war, and although John Holmes, who served as Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow from 1946 to 1948, believed that the meetings should become less formal and more of an open forum, he nevertheless wrote Lester Pearson in Ottawa that the greatest value of the gatherings was that by pooling information they produced a clearing of minds on the nature of events in the Soviet Union. To allay anxious minds in the East Block, Holmes also stated: "I have no reason to believe that the holding of these meetings has led to any misunderstanding by foreign missions of the nature of the Commonwealth."<sup>66</sup> Pearson, not convinced, replied:

Whatever the attitude of other foreign missions in Moscow may be, it seems to me that the Soviet Government's misunderstanding of the nature of the Commonwealth may be considerably increased by what must appear to them as the spectacle of managers of subordinate offices going every fortnight to the Head Office of the Commonwealth in Moscow for instructions and enlightenment.<sup>67</sup>

Pearson had been concerned about the security risk imposed by Indian representatives being privy to the discussions, especially while in Washington top secret negotiations for a military alliance against the Soviet Union were underway. Pearson's subordinates in Moscow evidently did not hold the Soviets to be as naive as he apparently did, and as John Watkins, an officer at the Canadian embassy wrote to Escott Reid, there was never any doubt that the Kremlin knew

---

66. DEA file 50386-A-40, despatch no. 278, Holmes to Pearson, 14 July 1948. Also interview with Arnold Smith, 6 June 1980.

67. *Ibid.*, Pearson to Holmes, 23 July 1948.

who influenced whom and what was what in the Commonwealth relationship.<sup>68</sup> The San Francisco Conference had after all demonstrated to the world the lack of a unitary Commonwealth policy. In 1946, a Commonwealth cacaphony had erupted in the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, as India assailed South Africa over the treatment of its Indian population. Earlier, following the Halifax speech in Toronto, Molotov had remarked to Wilgress that Mackenzie King had taught Lord Halifax his lesson.<sup>69</sup> Where the Soviet Union could use the existence of the meetings for its own purposes was in trying to subvert Indian's chances of remaining in the Commonwealth as a republic. Constitutionally, the nature of the Commonwealth was probably clearer to the Soviets than to the Americans.

Pearson, no doubt aware of the above considerations, was nevertheless fearful of the external appearance of Commonwealth consultation in foreign capitals. He wished meetings to be *ad hoc*, and when he discovered in July 1948 that there were informal weekly meetings of Commonwealth representatives in Nanking, he was not pleased: "There are considerations which make it necessary to take a somewhat reserved attitude towards standardization of the practice, as well as towards discussion of certain subjects at such meetings."<sup>70</sup> The gatherings did not become regular.

Informal meetings took place in other foreign capitals, but these were irregular and without much significance. In a few Latin American countries, for example, the presence of nationalistic French Canadian representatives in capitals where British diplomats were generally of the "old school", added some fireworks to consultation, especially when other Commonwealth members were not represented. Although not quite causing a crisis in Anglo-Canadian relations, there was embarrassment in both London and Ottawa when the British minister in Havana labelled his Canadian counterpart a "separatist" - that is, meaning separation from the British Empire -

---

68. DEA file 50385-A-40, despatch no. 278, Watkins to Reid, 10 January 1949.

69. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 344, file 3712, Wilgress to King, 4 March 1944. Molotov had expressed great interest in King's speech in Parliament.

70. DEA file 50386-A-40, Pearson to T.C. Davis (Canadian Ambassador to China), 22 July 1948.



and when Sir D. Gainer, British ambassador to Brazil, referred to his Canadian colleague Jean Désy, as a "pompous, vain and self-advertising little man...and I begin to suspect that he renders only lipservice to the Empire..."<sup>71</sup> Clearly, Commonwealth consultation was not feasible on all fronts.

Although Canada had passed on copies of despatches to the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth members, particularly reports which emanated from the consulate in Greenland, various missions in Latin America, and from Wilgress in Moscow - each time to effusive gratitude from London - it was not until late 1949 that a standardized system for distribution of Canadian print to Commonwealth countries other than the United Kingdom was implemented. The advantages of keeping other member countries as fully informed as possible, thereby encouraging them to do the same, appealed to Canada, but there was an ulterior motive: Canadian membership on the Security Council was due to expire.<sup>72</sup> Before this time information had been shared on an *ad hoc* basis, and was often informally imparted at international conferences, or at the request of the resident High Commissioner. The path of communication between Dominion capitals was used, but it was not well-worn. Consultation between the Dominions was characterized by a certain awkwardness and even unilateralism, which in turn emphasized the divergent interests and priorities of the countries. Instances were numerous: South Africa frequently consulted Canada through Canada House in London instead of directly or through the Canadian High Commissioner in Cape Town; Herbert Evatt failed to make the requisite courtesy call on the Canadian

---

71. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W6688/266/68, report from Sir D. Gainer, 10 June 1946; W1192/102/68, Dodds (UK minister to Cuba) to Mason (Foreign Office), 14 January. The Canadians were quite descriptive about their British counterparts as well. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 232, file 2260, memorandum from Robertson to King, 25 April 1946.

72. DEA file 10984-C-40, draft memorandum by R.A.D. Ford, "Distribution of Information to other Commonwealth Governments", 1 November 1949. Also letter from Wilgress (now High Commissioner to the U.K.) to Heeney (now Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs), 28 June 1949. Wilgress believed that increased Canadian willingness to distribute information would help to convince the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Foreign Office to give Canada preferential treatment regarding information concerning the North Atlantic area and Western Europe.

High Commissioner in Canberra before departing for an official visit to Ottawa; and Canada launched its draft convention for an international civil aviation authority on its unsuspecting peers.<sup>73</sup>

In view of this tendency toward unilateral action, which the United Kingdom had also not failed to exhibit when warranted by expediency, there was by 1948 a growing belief in Britain and in Australia that there should be some form of regularization of consultative practice so that consultation could take place early while policy was still in its formative stages. As a result, the meeting of prime ministers in October 1948 duly produced a statement on Commonwealth consultation which, in addition to affirming existing practices, called for meetings of the prime ministers to be held as often as practicable, with meetings of foreign ministers possibly taking place twice a year, the first to take place in Ceylon in May 1949.<sup>74</sup> Louis St. Laurent, already leader of the Liberal Party but not yet Prime Minister, was summoned to London to act for the ailing Mackenzie King who was confined to his suite at the Dorchester Hotel. St. Laurent indicated that it would be more in the interests of the Commonwealth if there was no rigidity or formalization - meetings of the General Assembly of the United Nations offered a more natural setting for consultation amongst foreign ministers. Both Canada and South Africa reserved their positions on the proposal, but significantly, India, Pakistan and Ceylon - now represented as Dominions at their first Prime Ministers' Meeting - were in favour. The text of the proposal was not completed, pending subsequent agreement on the frequency of the meetings and their venue. In the telegraphic consultation which followed, Canada and South Africa firmly indicated their unwillingness to give in and the proposal for formal meetings

---

73. DEA file 50020-40, Holmes to Wrong, 11 May 1946; also K.A. Greene (Canadian High Commissioner to Australia) to Pearson, 27 May 1948. The Australians had been particularly grateful for copies of despatches from the Canadian Chargé d'Affaires in Prague where Australia was not represented. F.M. Forde (Australian High Commissioner to Canada) to Pearson, 6 December 1947.

74. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 325, file 3416, copy of U.K. paper PMM(48)16 (revise), "Commonwealth Consultation", 21 October 1948.



was eventually abandoned.<sup>75</sup>

Practical Commonwealth consultation at the United Nations was realized, as were meetings which would discuss specific fields such as finance and education. When viewed against the modes of consultation which had developed in London, in foreign capitals, and in Ottawa, it should come as no surprise that the Canadians were generally content - as Mackenzie King often said - with the "existing nature of consultation". But this "existing nature" had been in a state of flux and change during the 1940s, and had led ultimately to what was preferable to Canada: an inside view of the making of great power policy and an opportunity to influence policy which could affect continuing bilateral and newfound multilateral Canadian concerns. To a degree, the Commonwealth had begun to reflect Canada's functional principle.

---

75. DEA file 50023-40, memorandum, "Meetings of Commonwealth Ministers responsible for foreign affairs: proposals of 1948 and discussion of them", 15 December 1949.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NEW COMMONWEALTH

In 1884, Lord Rosebery uttered what in retrospect can be considered to have been both an inventive and prophetic remark: "There is no need for any nation, however great, leaving the Empire, because the Empire is a Commonwealth of all Nations."<sup>1</sup> The coming of independence of the Asian colonies of the Empire during the late 1940s marked the greatest transition of the character of the Commonwealth as well as the greatest challenge to Rosebery's definition of it. The central question was whether the emerging nations of Eastern Asia would decide at independence to remain within the association, or prefer to assume what was seen as complete independence without it, as Ireland and Burma eventually did. The emergence of new members as republics within an association whose membership had heretofore rested

---

1. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2352, anonymous memorandum of 4 June 1947. Lionel Curtis had been thought to be the originator of the expression "Commonwealth of Nations". Curtis acknowledged that Rosebery had first used the phrase, but stated that it had entered his own head independently. Letter from Lionel Curtis to J.S. Ewart, 7 May 1941, quoted in the memorandum.



on a constitutional common denominator, certainly represented a radical change. Although not quite as visible but also important in heralding a new era in Commonwealth relations, was the collapse of the idea of a concerted Commonwealth defence system, which had always lurked beneath the surface of Commonwealth relations for the better part of the century. The purpose of this chapter is to examine Canadian attitudes and involvement in both areas of change.

At the San Francisco Conference, Mackenzie King had confided his brooding and pessimistic thoughts on peace and the dangers of renewed warfare to his diary. To him, the election of Clement Attlee's Labour Party in the United Kingdom immediately following the conference had appeared as a bright spot on an increasingly troubled horizon. Here was a government which unlike the previous Conservative one was not founded upon "force and power", and what was more, the Canadian Prime Minister was relieved "that at Imperial Conferences and Peace Conferences I know I will not have to be bucking centralized Imperialism again."<sup>2</sup> Time would prove King to have been overly optimistic. Upon his first meeting with the new Labour Government in November 1945, when Mackenzie King had journeyed to London to discuss the implications of the revelation of a Soviet espionage ring in Ottawa, he was asked by Attlee and Addison to offer his views on how to better strengthen the coordination of the defence of the Empire.

The Canadian Prime Minister had been unfailingly consistent in expressing himself on this subject since 1923, when the Imperial Conference had affirmed "that it is for the Parliaments of the several parts of the Empire, upon the recommendations of their retrospective Governments to decide the nature and extent of any action which should be taken by them." In 1926 and again at the 1937 Imperial Conference, the right of the individual Dominions to control their own defence policies was re-stated, but encouragement was given for freer interchange of military information, standardization of military equipment, cooperation for the defence of communications installations, and for continuance of arrangements some of the Dominions had with Britain for concerting the scale of defences of ports. The Dominions had also been consistently invited to participate through represen-

---

2. King Diary, 26 July 1945.

tatives on a Committee of Imperial Defence, a body which had existed since 1911. Canada had taken its place on the Committee before the First World War but eschewed participation thereafter. The Second World War, according to a 1948 Canadian Cabinet memorandum, had forcibly demonstrated the vulnerability of Canadian dependence upon United Kingdom sources for arms and equipment, a problem also illustrated by the difficulties encountered when the United States and Canadian forces undertook joint operations later in the war. As a result there was a growing realization within governing circles in Canada - especially within the East Block - that cooperation in the military field with the United States was at least as important as working together with the United Kingdom.<sup>3</sup> Following the formation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in 1940, Canadian and American defence interests became more closely allied, a development which paralleled tendencies towards closer economic and industrial integration between the two countries.

Mackenzie King instinctively abhorred the idea of a shared Commonwealth defence scheme controlled from London, whether as part of a unitary foreign policy or as an entity unto itself in the form of the Committee on Imperial Defence. His reaction to anything which smacked of centralization - as Curtin and Halifax discovered to their dismay - was always negative, regardless from which quarter proposals emanated. But there was a method to what many - particularly British officials - saw as the Canadian Prime Minister's paranoia. King earnestly believed that the slightest encouragement from his government, even on a technical matter, would cause British Conservatives, those who in his eyes were concerned with "force and power", to embark on new and to him more preposterous schemes for Commonwealth defence centralization. His belief was not completely unfounded. When a Canadian Joint Staff Mission was officially created in London in March 1944, Cranborne, though disappointed that the Canadians would not agree to have the mission serve as a direct link between the Canadian and the British Chiefs of Staff, nevertheless indicated his optimism in a letter to Churchill:

---

3. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, memorandum, "Defence Cooperation within the Commonwealth", 2 October 1948.



We are hoping after the war for the closest possible collaboration, militarily and otherwise, within the British Commonwealth. Canada has, as you know, at times displayed a tendency to pursue an independent line and to seek closer cooperation with the United States rather than with us. This proposal for closer liaison in London in the military sphere is, coming as it does from the Canadian Government, a rare and encouraging sign for future collaboration.<sup>4</sup>

It was Cranborne too, who, following the embarrassing withdrawal of Curtin's plans for a rudimentary Commonwealth secretariat at the May 1944 Prime Ministers' Meeting, introduced proposals for post-war Commonwealth defence coordination. Cranborne suggested a standing committee of the Imperial Conference which would deal with strategic questions; regular meetings between Defence Ministers and Chiefs of Staff of Commonwealth members; an extended system for interchange of military staffs; exchange and training of officers through defence colleges; studies of how industrial potential could be co-ordinated throughout the Commonwealth; and the continuation on a common model of the organization, training and equipment of forces throughout the Commonwealth. Peter Fraser, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, also circulated a note which called for increased planning powers for the Committee of Imperial Defence and the establishment of local committees in the Dominions and colonies which would be responsible to the central committee in London.<sup>5</sup>

Before the prime ministers gathered in London, the philosophy expressed by the British Chiefs of Staff Committee was that the ideas of a world security system as envisioned in the Foreign Office's "United Nations Plan" and of a coordinated Imperial defence policy were not incompatible. The British Commonwealth could therefore take its "proper place" in a world security system, and to do so, "the individual Governments of the Commonwealth must be ready to bear their

---

4. Dominions Office, DO 121/10A, Cranborne to Churchill, 28 March 1944.

5. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 322, file 3407, copy of United Kingdom document PMM(44)14, 15 May 1944. At the end of his note, Fraser had added that his proposals should not be regarded "as detracting from the necessity for and the importance of an adequate and effective World Security Organisation such as is contemplated in the Moscow Declaration, 1943."

full share in our general defensive organisation, and to undertake commitments which may appear to limit to some extent their independent sovereignty."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, a British Commonwealth defence system would be securely in place if, as it might happen, the global system would collapse. Nothing could have been further from the Canadian point of view, either traditionally or in relation to the way the functional principle was being adapted by Hume Wrong and his charges in the Post-Hostilities Problems Committee in Ottawa. As Norman Robertson informed the Prime Minister on the day of the presentation of Cranborne's and Fraser's proposals:

Main security problem after the war is world security, not regional or Commonwealth security. It would be unrealistic to consider defence arrangements between Commonwealth countries as in any way an alternative or substitute for a strong world security organisation to which each of us will have to make our appropriate and proportionate contribution.<sup>7</sup>

As it happened, there was virtually no discussion of Cranborne's proposals, and they were deferred for further consideration at an unspecified date. Mackenzie King, having told the meeting that such questions were best discussed in peace-time, returned with the proposals to Ottawa, no doubt hoping all the while that future circumstances, such as an imminent British election, would make the entire issue of Commonwealth defence fade away.

In Ottawa, there was a sporadic amount of discussion of Cranborne's proposals which declined as the busy Department of External Affairs became more preoccupied with the challenges presented by the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and the forthcoming San Francisco Conference. General Maurice Pope, however, gave the issue some attention during the summer of 1945. He readily admitted that "my perplexity arises from the fact that, as always, the British case is stated from such a high moral plane that those who find themselves constrained to take a contrary view find themselves in the invidious position of one who

---

6. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W5448/1534/68, War Cabinet Document C.O.S.(44)58, "The Co-ordination of Defence Policy within the British Commonwealth in Relation to a World System of Security", 31 March 1944.

7. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 323, file 3411, memorandum from Robertson to King, 15 May 1944.



is in the act of letting the side down."<sup>8</sup> To prove his point, Pope specifically referred to Cranborne's line of argument which commenced with the notion of a close link between a Commonwealth defence system and the world security system under the United Nations but then stated that the British Commonwealth, its nations "freely acting in association", would compose one of the four great powers in the global defence system. General Pope agreed that existing schemes of defence cooperation, such as interchanges of staff officers, and standardization of equipment, should continue pursuant to Canada's continental defence requirements, but any scheme of Commonwealth defence cooperation must of necessity wait until it was made clear what regional defence agreements would be initiated under the aegis of the new Security Council.<sup>9</sup>

Some months later, Malcolm MacDonald offered a progress report on Canadian reactions to Cranborne's proposals to Lord Addison, Cranborne's successor in the newly-elected Labour Government. The High Commissioner wrote that Mackenzie King had found solace in his familiar "Parliament will decide" dictum, and there appeared to be an "unhealthy tendency" in Canada to think of the United Nations as a security system in spite of the fact that at one time the entire "burden of keeping the Axis at bay" had been placed upon the Commonwealth. Canada produced its case against a Commonwealth defence system by emphasizing two factors: the role of the United Nations in global security and Canada's special relationship with the United States.<sup>10</sup> To MacDonald, it appeared that Canada relied too heavily on these factors, and was unwilling to accept the military commitments which the maintenance of its new middle power status would logically require. MacDonald also reported that Robertson reacted negatively to the continuation of the Committee of Imperial Defence,

---

8. Pope Diary, vol. 1, secret file 30-6, memorandum prepared for Robertson, Wrong and Heeney, 11 August 1945. Pope added: "The British habit of investing their policies with such a cloak of sanctity reminds me of Professor Banse's amusing dictum, 'They say Christ, but they mean cotton.'"

9. *Ibid.*

10. Dominions Office, DO 35/1746, WG 785/1/2, MacDonald to Addison, 25 October 1945.

the Under-Secretary arguing that much more could be gained through bilateral discussions as a means of considering what contributions could be made jointly to a regional defence system under the United Nations. Hume Wrong, the resident realist and sometime cynic of the Department of External Affairs, went even further, telling Stephen Holmes, now Deputy High Commissioner, that the whole concept of Imperial Defence was unreal, that it meant little or nothing to Canada, and that any rate it had to be completely reviewed in light of the atomic bomb. Arnold Heeney, who as Secretary to the Cabinet was well-placed to take an interest in defence questions, believed that the British inclination to speak of "our Dominions" still uncomfortably lingered, and it was indeed high time that British policy-makers treated the Dominions as separate entities according to their divergent interests and aspirations.<sup>11</sup> The Canadians seemed more aware of changed and changing conditions in the global balance of power than the British at this stage, yet at the same time exhibited too much sensitivity when it came to possible United Kingdom intentions.<sup>12</sup> The functional principle weighed heavily in the Canadian approach to the issue of concerted Commonwealth defence and as such reflected a desire - though not always lucidly articulated and often simply expressed as fear of British plans - that the benefits enjoyed by members of the Commonwealth at present could quickly disappear with the onset of formal Commonwealth machinery.

What could be regarded as the deciding battle on the Commonwealth defence issue took place during 1946. Another Prime Ministers' Meeting was in the offing for the spring, and although Canadian officials had been relatively content with the pragmatic issue-oriented approach followed at the 1944 meeting and exhibited again in 1945 at the special conversations in London before the San Francisco Conference, Mackenzie King was ill at ease. More than a little annoyed by rather clumsy wording in the British invitation which implied that

---

11. Dominions Office, DO 35/1746, WG 785/1/2, memorandum from Stephen Holmes to Malcolm MacDonald regarding dinner both men had with Hume Wrong and Arnold Heeney, 10 November 1945.

12. A similar conclusion was drawn in Frederic Soward's policy review of 1951 and 1952. DEA file 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), Chapter 3, "Foreign Policy and Defence", pp. 132-133.



his presence was essential to satisfy British public opinion, he was more preoccupied with a full legislative programme, which included a budget and a Dominion-Provincial conference. Consequently the Prime Minister believed that he could only attend the latter part of the London discussions if at all, and was if anything more concerned with attending the Paris Peace Conference later in the summer, which he had hoped could be combined with Commonwealth talks.<sup>13</sup> King of course realized that it would be politically disadvantageous to let the other Commonwealth prime ministers meet without him. As it was, the Prime Ministers' Meeting really became a series of bilateral discussions, owing to the diverse schedules of the prime ministers.

There were other background causes for concern. In London, officials spoke of the formation of a route squadron composed of personnel from the air forces of Commonwealth members. In a letter to Malcolm MacDonald in February, Norman Robertson stated that it would not be possible for the Royal Canadian Air Force to participate in a venture of this kind, chiefly because of the complexity of the problems involving the transition of the RCAF from a wartime to a peacetime footing.<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, Canadian policy-makers demonstrated a greater interest in defence cooperation of a more functional nature, such as defence research. They were successful in convincing their British counterparts to revise a planned agenda for a summer conference of scientists in order to include greater consideration of research coordination with the United States. A basic tenet which Canada also impressed upon the United Kingdom in this instance was that more could be accomplished technically through agreements concluded at departmental levels than officially by the governments themselves.<sup>15</sup>

---

13. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, cable no. 155, King to Attlee, 23 April 1946; also King Diary, 8-10 May 1946.

14. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 413, copy of letter from Robertson to MacDonald, 23 February 1946. Robertson had prefaced his letter with a sentence which King had underscored and questioned: "The matter has now been carefully considered and it is recognized that the aims of the proposed organization are important and would meet a definite need."

15. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2350, memorandum from Wrong to King, 19 March 1946 and letter from Norman Robertson to Stephen Holmes, 16 March 1946.

Also during the early spring of 1946, a two-day debate at Westminster which dealt chiefly with demobilization, garnered a disproportionate share of press attention, the result of course being that there was once again public speculation on the possibility of a grand Imperial security scheme. King cabled Massey to stress that he favoured the abolition of the term "Imperial Defence" altogether from current usage since it inevitably caused misunderstandings. In response to the press reports which had appeared in the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister emphatically restated the Canadian position to Massey:

The strategic interests of the Commonwealth are so diverse that their protection requires the coordination of defence between individual Commonwealth countries and foreign states. This is obvious in the case of the United Kingdom when one considers the British defence interests in western Europe. In some quarters in London there is difficulty in realizing that it is also obvious elsewhere.<sup>16</sup>

Yet even among the enlightened British representatives in Ottawa, there existed a proclivity to explain Canadian recalcitrance as a "selfish canniness" which was more concerned with cooperation in the short run rather than the long:

Occasionally, and against her better judgment, she (Canada) professed to believe that cooperation with us and others in defence or in other aspects of the responsibilities of nationhood is sought as a matter of form, that her contribution would be but a drop in the bucket. But fundamentally it is still a reluctance to commit herself in the international field which militates against full co-operation. She must be brought to realise that this habit of mind is not the characteristic of maturity or adult stature. She cannot, in other words, have it both ways.<sup>17</sup>

But the United Kingdom could not have it both ways either. Australia, through the energy of Herbert Evatt, had claimed a greater role in decisions relating to the defence of the Pacific Ocean, unmindful of the fact that the United Kingdom wished to use the strategic advantages it held there to bargain with the United States on

---

16. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 410, cable no. 695, King to Massey, 23 March 1946.

17. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W5336/102/68, copy of despatch no. 172, Stephen Holmes to Lord Addison, 13 April 1946. This document was printed and circulated in the Foreign Office.



a global scale. The insouciance of the Australians was demonstrated when their representative on the Japanese Peace Council publicly proclaimed his role as one of mediation between the polarized positions taken by the United States and the Soviet Union. This assumption infuriated the Foreign Office. What struck the Canadians as Australian brashness led John Holmes to conclude at Canada House that "I think their irresponsibility is going to win our point on Commonwealth foreign policy. It is certainly helping to win us support in the Foreign Office."<sup>18</sup>

There was no real surprise on anyone's part therefore, when Australian Prime Minister J.B. Chifley reacted angrily to newspaper reports which appeared during his attendance at the May 1946 Prime Ministers' Meeting. Streamer headlines, particularly in the Beaverbrook press, announced that Empire statesmen were giving consideration to the creation of a "Super Cabinet of 20".<sup>19</sup> Field Marshal Smuts, fearful of what was apparently occurring in London, and that British officials would use the interval between his and Mackenzie King's arrival to try to influence him to change his attitude in order to create an absence of allies for the Canadian Prime Minister, requested a memorandum describing the Canadian position on Commonwealth defence through the Canadian High Commission in Cape Town.<sup>20</sup>

Such fears of a grand Commonwealth defence design and British expectations of at least some increased commitments from the Dominions were all for naught because nothing was agreed upon in London, or at least, not while Mackenzie King was there. On 23 May, he rejected the view put forward by Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin that the Dominions should accept responsibility for the defence of their respective regions of the Commonwealth, and stated that as he had already informed the United Kingdom, he could make no commitments whatsoever

---

18. DEA, file 6133-40, vol. 3, John Holmes to Hume Wrong, 1 May 1946.

19. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, cable no. 996, Massey to King, 24 April 1946. *The Times* was also guilty. A report of 3 March indicated the imminent formation of a grand organization for Commonwealth defence.

20. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 324, file 3413, background memorandum for King prepared by James Gibson, April 1946.

without close consultation with his colleagues. Bevin's often emotional speech, which detailed the state of the United Kingdom's burden of defence obligations, caused Robertson to observe that "Although the facts of the United Kingdom position are sobering, there was an air of unreality in much of the discussions because of the almost complete failure to consider the position of the United States in relation to general responsibilities for the maintenance of world security."<sup>21</sup>

Mackenzie King returned to Canada after reluctantly agreeing to present to his Cabinet a British proposal for the establishment of positions for military attaches who would work closely with British military planners. The Cabinet did not debate the proposal until November, which gave the Prime Minister enough time to allow his simmering anti-centralization thoughts to become obsessive, especially in the wake of Whitehall impatience for a decision, and the publication of a United Kingdom White Paper which implied somewhat more responsibility for the attaches - that is a decision-making role - than Canada had been led to expect.<sup>22</sup> Significantly, the White Paper had eliminated the word "Imperial" from the name of the Defence Committee, but made no mention of the role of the United States in defence matters.

During the interim period, the Canadians also went to work on the British press. A case in point was the North American visit of the editor of *The Times*, R.M. Barrington-Ward. In Ottawa, he was given an official dinner with the Prime Minister himself presiding, and was undoubtedly surprised as Mackenzie King, Arnold Heeney and Lester Pearson individually drew him aside to impress him with the finer points of the Canadian argument against a Commonwealth defence scheme. If that were not enough, the beleaguered editor then journeyed

---

21. Privy Council Office, vol. 107, file U-10-11, cable no. 1226, Robertson to Wrong, 25 May 1946.

22. DEA, file 7CM-1(s), "Memorandum for the Prime Minister; Canada-United Kingdom Defence Questions", 13 November 1946; also copy of United Kingdom White Paper, Cmd. 6923, "Central Organisation for Defence", 5 October 1946. The Governor General, Viscount Alexander of Tunis, was helpful in calming the Prime Minister's nerves when King sought advice on this matter. See James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada; Peacemaking and Deterrence*, pp. 223-4.



to Washington, where among the first people he encountered was ambassador Hume Wrong, who did not mince his words either:

Commonwealth defence could not be treated separately in any realistic sense, and it was foolish to talk about it as though it could be planned and organized on any Commonwealth basis. If we had to use the phrase, it would probably mean in Canada, that Canada, in association with the United States, would take responsibility for the defence of North America and the sea approaches. It could not mean that we could make a 'contribution' to the organization of the defences of Commonwealth interests in other parts of the world.<sup>23</sup>

On 15 November, the Canadian Cabinet, after much discussion, agreed to appoint one liaison officer from each of the Armed Services and the Defence Research Board to serve as staff members at Canada House where they would under no circumstances partake in any planning exercises and would be solely responsible to the High Commissioner. The British really had no choice but to accept the Canadian decision which Attlee agreed was "eminently characteristic."<sup>24</sup> Events quickly overtook any further deliberations for a centralized form of Commonwealth defence, and with the exception of related questions at the 1948 Prime Ministers' Meeting - which by then lacked any conviction since the Commonwealth had expanded - and the issue of a Commonwealth Division in the Korean War in 1950, the notion of a grand Imperial or Commonwealth defence system which had endured for half a century quietly came to an end.

To be sure, the Canadian case had been over-stated, but for Canada the question of defence had to be examined in terms of a North Atlantic partnership which perforce had to include a very close functional relationship with the United States. This realization placed Canada in a more receptive and even leading position during the next year as plans for Western Union and the North Atlantic Treaty began to germinate. As Smuts lucidly remarked in 1948, "The more machinery we have, the more friction there will be."<sup>25</sup> By not straying from

---

23. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2350, Wrong to Pearson, 9 November 1946; also Pearson to Robertson, 18 November 1946.

24. Dominions Office, DO 35/1748, WG 785/1/14, minute by Attlee, 23 November 1946.

25. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2351, Smuts quoted in a Chatham House paper by Nicholas Mansergh, 27 July 1948.

the narrow definition of its own self-interest in the field of defence, and because of its conception of the Commonwealth as an unfettered association of independent states, Canada may have prevented subsequent intra-Commonwealth friction or even dissolution over the defence issue. Such friction may have served to discourage newer members from remaining in the association.

\* \* \*

Pillau and Kurma, burning hot,  
Pickles and lime and mango juice,  
A still remembered saint, Rajghat,  
Sarees and smells and Republican hues,  
All these, we hope, haven't ruined the health  
Of our valiant guests from the Commonwealth.<sup>26</sup>

The defence issue had been a continuous one in Commonwealth development, seemingly always to loom in the background between meetings of the prime ministers and in the foreground during them. In short, Commonwealth leaders were faced with a known quantity and guided their responses according to what would best suit their own interests and their conception of the common interest. But although changes in the membership of the Commonwealth had been long in coming, the pace of developments during the 1940s, already exhibited in the growth of international personalities of the Dominions, but more so in the independence of former colonies, especially India, marked a sharp change in the evolution of the association. The rapidity of this development, with its constitutional overtones, threatened the continued existence of the Commonwealth, and after some initial hesitation, Canada played no small part in helping to bring matters to an agreeable conclusion.

Mackenzie King, with some justification always wary of centralist designs, never lost faith in the internal dynamic of the Commonwealth as a force for good. The concept of freedom with association appealed to his late nineteenth century liberal views, and was consistent with the tenets of community and fellowship he had expressed earlier in *Industry and Humanity*. In 1923, King had indi-

---

26. Pearson Papers, Pre-1958 Series, vol. 2, copy of a verse from Krishna Menon (Indian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom) to Warwick Chipman (Canadian High Commissioner to India), 27 April 1950.



cated some uncertainty over the connotations of "Empire" and "Commonwealth", and had concluded that "Community of British Nations" represented the most appropriate means of description, since it held promise for a future ideal relationship.<sup>27</sup> In making this assessment, King had reflected upon his past visit to India while Deputy Minister of Labour in 1908, when, in addition to stating that Indians were too different to assimilate into the fabric of Canadian society, he asserted that India would eventually aspire to self-government, however long it may take.<sup>28</sup>

By the time a draft British declaration of policy on India arrived in Ottawa in March 1942, events in India, the war and changes in the Commonwealth itself had convinced the Canadian Prime Minister that the time for India's moment had come, and he reacted by taking an uncharacteristic initiative to promote the cause of Indian independence. The British document, which was to be discussed with Indian leaders by the Lord Privy Seal, Sir Stafford Cripps, stipulated that the object of United Kingdom policy was to create a union in India which would effectively make India a Dominion, equal to the other Dominions and bound like them by a common allegiance to the Crown. The Congress Party, under Pandit Nehru the driving force for Indian independence, had earlier indicated that immediate independence and not Dominion status was its desired goal, a view not likely to court favour with the British, Churchill in particular, who was very much against reform taking place during the war. He was more concerned with the political expediency of the Cripps mission than whether or not it produced results. Indeed, there were many other factors to consider: the Muslim League, representing India's largest minority, insisted on the recognition of its interests through the formation of Pakistan; the Indian army was not wholly supportive of the ideas of Congress; and there were the Untouchables and the treaties with the

---

27. Unpublished paper by the author, "Canada and the Crisis at Chanak: A Hesitant Step Toward Autonomy" (April 1978), p. 26, Mackenzie King to Peter Larkin (Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom), 6 January 1923.

28. For an informative account of the development of King's views before the 1940s, see Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada: Peacemaking and Deterrence*, pp. 226-231.

many princes to bear in mind. Into this Asian maelstrom stepped the well-intentioned Canadian Prime Minister with a telegram of encouragement, designed to harm no one, least of all the British, since the Indian question was their largest public relations problem in the United States:

The Canadian Government heartily welcomes the statement of policy laying down the steps it is proposed to take for the earliest possible realization of complete self-government in India...We believe that a fully self-governing India has a great part to play in free and equal association with the other nations of the British Commonwealth and that a free India, fighting alongside the other free peoples of the world, will strengthen immeasurably the common cause...<sup>29</sup>

Churchill was not pleased, especially when an additional telegram from King detailed a conversation between himself and T.V. Soong, the Chinese Foreign Minister and brother-in-law of Chiang Kai-Shek. The Generalissimo had told Soong that the military situation in India could only be improved if India were immediately given its independence, an aim which Mackenzie King and his colleagues believed could be achieved if no time were lost in publicizing and gaining acceptance of the United Kingdom government's proposals. In a subsequent telegram in which he offered his good offices to assist Cripps in his mission, Mackenzie King could not conceal his eagerness to promote his view of the Commonwealth as a community of equal and like-minded nations:

Having regard to the evolution of self-government in Canada and the position taken by Canada in peace negotiations after the last war, and at subsequent Imperial Conferences with respect to equality of status of all self-governing parts of the British Commonwealth, it might well be that strong assurances to India on the part of Canada as to the helpful role we would be prepared to take on her behalf might not be without some real effect at this time.<sup>30</sup>

So possessed was King by the idea of the mission which he and Canada could fulfil that on the same day he telephoned Soong in Washington to relay a message to Nehru via Chiang, stating that the Canadian Prime Minister, as the grandson of William Lyon Mackenzie,

---

29. DEA, file 11004-40, cable no. 73, King to Churchill, 15 March 1942.

30. DEA, file 11004-40, cable no. 79, King to Churchill, 15 March 1942.



would do his utmost to bring self-government to India, and would support any promises which Cripps might make.<sup>31</sup> Churchill was unaware of this last assurance, but took umbrage at the two cables addressed to him, and informed King that the "Indian problem" was not constitutional but internal, and that Chiang - without assuming too much one can read "King" - was "blissfully ignorant of Indian affairs."<sup>32</sup> He also implied that the errant Canadian Prime Minister should have patience until the Cripps mission produced results, something it did not do, since on defence questions too little had been offered too late.

No doubt King was disappointed and surprised by Churchill's response, but a personal letter of thanks from Leopold Amery, the Secretary of State for India, probably helped to soothe his wounded pride. Mackenzie King had, after all, expressed his long-standing views with intent to proffer advice to India much in the same way he had sent messages to Eamon de Valera a year earlier in offering to lend his support to secure the independence of Ireland within the Commonwealth framework.<sup>33</sup> There had been no apparent attempts to mute King's zeal by the officials of the Department of External Affairs. Henry Angus, a special wartime assistant, and at the time the acknowledged Indian expert within the Department, did not deal with the Prime Minister directly; Robertson and Wrong on the other hand, had demonstrated comparatively little interest in India at this stage. Had Mackenzie King trusted Vincent Massey's opinions from London, he may have entertained a better idea of what to expect from Churchill.

In his cable to the United Kingdom Prime Minister of 15 March, Mackenzie King had suggested that "as evidence of readiness of Dominions to accord recognition of Dominion status to India in so far as that may be possible while war is in progress, an exchange of High Commissions between the Dominions and India might be immediately arranged." When this question was brought before the Canadian Cabinet

---

31. King Diary, 15 March 1942.

32. cf. Eayrs, p. 232.

33. For more on Canada's wartime relations with Ireland, see Fred McEvoy, "Canadian-Irish Relations during the Second World War", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* V, no. 2 (January 1977), pp. 206-226.

War Committee on 26 March, it was decided not to name a High Commissioner until it was clear what the Cripps mission had achieved.<sup>34</sup>

Earlier, and shortly before his death in 1941, O.D. Skelton, the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, had written to the Prime Minister that the appointment of a Canadian High Commissioner to India would be of definite value on Indian public opinion, but that any such gesture would be wasted as long as Canada refused to enfranchise East Indians living within British Columbia. "If we could take some action on the franchise matter and the right man could be secured," Skelton opined, "it might be possible to help in this difficult situation." The Prime Minister's opinion had been hastily written on the bottom of Skelton's memorandum: "Let sleeping dogs lie."<sup>35</sup> As usual, where domestic policies were concerned, political expediency became Mackenzie King's watchword, and it was to this more characteristic philosophy that he returned when his conciliatory foray into the complexities of the Indian question had been rebuffed, especially when it became evident that representations by India to the Dominions Office had wished for a quick settlement to the franchise problem. The advantages which the Commonwealth and Canada would have gained through Indian independence and association - King almost surely counted on the fact that an independent India would never agree to a common foreign policy - took second place to the exigencies of domestic politics.

In October 1943 Prime Minister John Curtin of Australia announced that his country would be sending a High Commissioner to India. In the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, John Holmes, while acknowledging the fears of the politicians of a revival of the divisive

---

34. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, 26 March 1942. King had also mentioned the prospect of appointing a High Commissioner in his cable to Churchill of 6 March. Massey, who could have been helpful had he known what was being planned, was not informed of the Canadian position until a week later. DEA, file 11004-40, cable no. 500, Pearson to Massey, 14 March 1942.

35. DEA, file 11004-40, memorandum from Skelton to King, 20 January 1941. For an in-depth appraisal of domestic considerations, see J.F. Hilliker, "The British Columbia Franchise and Canadian Relations with India in Wartime, 1939-1945", *BC Studies* 46, (Summer 1980), pp. 40-60.



question of the status of East Indians in Canada, argued that an exchange of representatives with China had not produced a controversy among Chinese Canadians who also could not vote, that Australia had not altered its restrictive immigration policies, and that India had now appointed a High Commissioner to South Africa. "An able and tactful Canadian in New Delhi, co-operating with the Australian representative," Holmes wrote, "might play a crucial role in India. Finding such a man would, of course, be difficult, but it would be worth while making a determined effort to get the right man." Hume Wrong was more realistic about the Canadian role envisioned by his junior: "I have doubts whether the Can[adian] Gov[ernment] would or could play much part in 'settling' the Indian problems, but apart from this there is a good case for having a Canadian H.C. in New Delhi. I'm sorry Australia got in first."<sup>36</sup> In March 1944, Henry Angus, the departmental expert and himself a possible contender for the job, indicated that Canadian representation in India could possibly aid the political situation there by offering a source of accurate information concerning the handling of analagous problems in the Canadian experience - Confederation initially affecting only four provinces being the most obvious example - and by dispelling distrust of the United Kingdom by again citing Canadian comparisons.<sup>37</sup> The senior officials of the Department of External Affairs appeared to wish to have nothing to do with these recommendations, nor with representations from Malcolm MacDonald in April 1944 and September 1945 which conveyed anxious Indian desires for an exchange of High Commissioners. When Norman Robertson found himself in London in November 1945, he finally touched upon the ideal delaying tactic: Canada, he informed Sir Eric Machtig, although willing to receive a High Commissioner from India, would only

---

36. DEA, file 11004-40, Holmes, "Note for Mr. Wrong" and minute by Wrong, 3 November 1943. In March 1943, General Victor Odlum, Canadian Minister to China, wrote King that he should appoint a High Commissioner to India with whom he could compare notes. Note from Keenleyside to Robertson, 21 June 1943, referring to letter from Odlum to King, 2 March 1943.

37. DEA, Papers of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 827, file 735, memorandum from Angus to Robertson, 1 March 1944; also memorandum from Harry Ferns to Hugh Keenleyside, 5 November 1943.

reciprocate when the United Kingdom had appointed one of its own.<sup>38</sup>

The Canadians had repeatedly emphasized that the beleaguered condition of their fledgling Department of External Affairs had prevented them from finding an ideal candidate to be High Commissioner. This excuse served to divert attention from the primary political concern: the odious spectre of disenfranchisement of East Indians in British Columbia. There appeared to be, however, some genuine concern about the qualifications of any prospective choice for the position, a view shared in 1946 by Sir Girja Bajpai, the Indian Minister to the United States, who led Hume Wrong to report that "Bajpai is obviously deeply concerned over the inexperience and impulsiveness of the new Indian Government and hopes that the Americans and ourselves at least will have representatives there able to step out of the ordinary diplomatic role by giving wise counsel behind the scenes."<sup>39</sup> Angus had said precisely the same thing earlier. A 1942 list of possible appointees had included several who would surely have met the description: Henry Angus, Edgar Tarr, Brooke Claxton, and George Ferguson, a former High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. As it happened, John D. Kearney, a judge who had been a credible High Commissioner in Ireland, was appointed High Commissioner to India following India's accession to Dominion status in August 1947, when Canadian preoccupation with India's constitutional fate began in earnest. Although not an "Indian expert", Kearney would perform his duties well, his facility probably enhanced by his experience in Ireland. In April 1947, persons of East Indian, Chinese and native Indian origin were given the franchise in British Columbia.

With the exception of the High Commissioner issue, Canadian relations with India, though cordial, did not figure prominently in Canadian foreign policy until the imminence of Dominion status for India. Pearson was on friendly terms with Bajpai in Washington, but then with whom was Pearson not on good terms? The staff of the Canadian embassy in the United States had been involved in continued goodwill exercises to assist the United Kingdom to cope with the negative American publicity occasioned by its policies in India, something made

---

38. DEA, file 11004-40, Robertson to Machtig, 3 November 1945.

39. *Ibid.*, Wrong to Pearson, 2 December 1946.



more difficult by the fact that Bajpai - until 1946 still classified as the Indian "Agent-General" - was included in the British Embassy List.<sup>40</sup> One of the first issues which confronted the General Assembly of the new United Nations in 1946 was the dispute between India and South Africa over the latter's treatment of its Indian population. Although Canada refused to be drawn into a discussion of the merits of the controversy between its fellow Commonwealth members, Canadian interventions in the General Assembly were centered on the doubt which existed regarding the constitutional competence of the Assembly to judge such matters and pass the sort of condemnation of South Africa which India had requested. States favourable to the Indian point of view perceived the Canadian position - or lack thereof - as merely a covert way of joining the other white countries in defence of South Africa's racially discriminatory policies. Canada did, however, vote in favour of a resolution to request South Africa to place South West Africa, a mandated territory, under the trusteeship system.<sup>41</sup>

Of a more sustained interest were economic questions. Canada had generously offered to give India one hundred thousand tons of wheat in October 1943, provided that shipment could be arranged from western Canadian ports. The offer proved to be more difficult to follow through than imagined, since the United Kingdom desperately needed to husband all shipping resources in the North Atlantic for its own needs. Wheat should continue to be shipped to India from Australia as before, the British argued, but Canada could make token shipments when there was room in available ships. As a result, and in spite of the personal efforts of both Mackenzie King and Vincent Massey, by October 1944 India had only received five hundred thousand bushels of Canadian wheat.<sup>42</sup> Apparently another well-meaning Canadian effort had

---

40. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, Pearson to Robertson, 28 December 1945.

41. Reid Papers, vol. 5, memorandum by Escott Reid, "The Role Played by the Canadian Delegation in Discussions on the Main Political Issues which came before the Second Part of the First Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, October 23 - December 20, 1946", 22 December 1946.

42. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 44, file D-13-5-I, letter from Oliver Master (Acting Deputy Minister of Finance) to Karl Fraser, Director of Administration of the Canadian Mutual Aid Board, 6 October 1944; also, cable no. 185, Attlee (Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs) to King, 18 December 1943. Canadian wheat shipments were increased later in 1944 in response to an Indian seasonal food shortage and an Australian drought.

gone astray. The arrival in January 1944 of an Indian supply mission in Ottawa which requested assistance in the form of 160 locomotives and \$200 million worth of trucks, resulted in the signature of a Mutual Aid Agreement between India and Canada in November of the same year.<sup>43</sup> The hope of the commercial departments of the government was that the long-term prospects for trade such as this would lead to a lucrative Canadian trade market with India following the war.

By 1947, as he realized that the end of his remarkable career was drawing near, Mackenzie King appeared to suffer from a melancholia which reflected despair for the prospects of continued peace, with or without the United Nations. His dark mood also coloured his approach to the prospect of an expanding Commonwealth, particularly with a restless India about to achieve an independence the suddenness of which surprised him, and which could lead to many unforeseen and dangerous developments. Would India break free of the Commonwealth and establish alliances with other Asian countries thereby undermining the stability of the world? Would an independent India be willing to accept an "associated" link with the Commonwealth and where would this place other members? Worst of all, was the notion of a restructured Commonwealth merely another British ploy for conformity in disguise? King's idiosyncratic and overly-cautious approach to foreign policy during his last two years of his tenure as Prime Minister was diametrically opposed to the views being promulgated by the Department of External Affairs, now under new management. The Prime Minister, to be sure, could still make a scene in Cabinet, but his customary tight and cautious control of foreign affairs was no more. Louis St. Laurent launched a new era in Canadian foreign policy when he outlined its principles in his oft-quoted Gray Lecture at the University of Toronto on 13 January 1947. One of the foundations of Canadian foreign policy, according to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, was the Commonwealth, which exhibited "the vitality of a living functioning or-

---

43. Canada, *Treaty Series*, 1944, No. 31, "Agreement between Canada and India on the Principles Applying to the Provision by Canada of Canadian War Supplies to India under the War Appropriation (United Nations Mutual Aid) Acts of Canada, 1943 and 1944", 17 November 1944.



ganism which has been and which can continue to be used for good..."<sup>44</sup> King may have made the same statement during one of his more idealistic periods, but by this time St. Laurent's words carried more conviction. To maintain the *status quo* in the Commonwealth was unwise, St. Laurent believed, and as he later wrote a disgruntled member of Parliament with reference to Churchill's famous remark about the demise of the association, "The alternative is certainly not something which would be described as the liquidation of the Commonwealth and I am afraid I do not grasp what is meant by such an expression."<sup>45</sup> Neither did St. Laurent's deputy Lester Pearson, who, in addition to exhibiting his own brand of infectious nationalism, was also once again working closely with his idealistic influence Escott Reid, who as in Washington, so in Ottawa was Pearson's closest adviser. Evidently, Mackenzie King missed being in control of foreign policy and having Robertson and Wrong at his beck and call to offer counsel. His resentment boiled over when St. Laurent read a reply to a British telegram in Cabinet on 28 May 1947 which heartily endorsed the admission of India and Pakistan as full members of the Commonwealth. The Prime Minister insisted that a Canadian response be more understated because, not having been privy to the negotiations for Indian independence, the matter did not really concern Canada.<sup>46</sup> His strange moral tone prevailed, yet Pearson, as ever, was able to detect grounds for optimism:

We have accomplished one important thing. We have concurred, if negatively, in the addition of a new Indian state or new Indian states to the Commonwealth providing the Indians themselves desire that solution. We have, therefore, given our support to the doctrine that the composition of the Commonwealth cannot be changed without the consent of the existing members.<sup>47</sup>

Mackenzie King's petulance resulted in under-stated responses to British enquiries at the official level at least for the time being,

---

44. DEA, Statements and Speeches Series, no. 47/2, Louis St. Laurent, "The Foundation of Canadian Policy in World Affairs", 13 January 1947.

45. St. Laurent Papers, vol. 17, file 100, letter from Louis St. Laurent to J.M. Macdonnell, 8 March 1947.

46. King Diary, 28 May 1947.

47. Pearson Papers, vol. 13, Pearson to Robertson, 2 June 1947.

but did not deter intensive analysis of the Indian independence issue within the Department of External Affairs, the results of which were eventually formulated into policy.

Before India became independent and as such a member of the Commonwealth on 15 August 1947, study of the situation in the Department of External Affairs, as in the United Kingdom, was generally of a legalistic nature. Phraseology of British cables was studied intently, particularly references to "India remaining in the Commonwealth." As Reid informed Mackenzie King, "India up to the present has not been a member of the Commonwealth and the question now is not whether India should *remain* in the Commonwealth, but whether India should be offered *membership* in the Commonwealth." Perhaps the phrase "independence within the Commonwealth", which had been used in British telegrams, in lieu of the unpleasant "Dominion status", would be more appropriate to describe the anomalous position of India.<sup>48</sup> The Prime Minister was intrigued, but still firmly advocated a low-key approach. Neither Mackenzie King nor his officials needed to have worried, since the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had already acknowledged the fact that both Canada and South Africa were averse to the term "Dominion status". Indeed, the Canadians would have been surprised had they known the thoughts of Clement Attlee, themselves indicative of how far the British were prepared to go to maintain Commonwealth membership:

What I think is required is finding the formula which will enable the greatest number of independent units to adhere to the Commonwealth without excessive formality in their internal constitutions or in their relationship to Great Britain, the Commonwealth and one another. Some such phrase for instance as "The Associated States of the Commonwealth" might provide an umbrella under which a number of independent States might be brought together...<sup>49</sup>

British intentions were made clear to the Canadians through a visit to Ottawa in August 1948 by Sir Norman Brook, the Secretary to the United Kingdom Cabinet. A Prime Ministers' Meeting had been

---

48. R.A. MacKay Papers, vol. 2, file "Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference - Correspondence and Memoranda, 1947-48", memorandum from Reid to King, 30 May 1947. Reid's emphasis.

49. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, W4785/4414/68, personal minute by Attlee, 14 May 1947.



scheduled for October of that year, the purpose of Brook's tour being to seek informally the views of the "older members" on possible re-definition of Commonwealth relationships which would in turn be discussed at the forthcoming meeting, though not necessarily at the conference table. The single most significant impression the Canadians were left with was that the United Kingdom intended to avoid any attempt to devise a new "constitution" for the Commonwealth when the prime ministers met in October. Nor did the British government have in mind any new "centralized" schemes for defence or otherwise, thereby appearing to be closer to prevailing Canadian conceptions of the Commonwealth relationship than ever before. The expressions "British Commonwealth of Nations", "Dominion" and "British subject", would be discontinued in practice and replaced with "The Commonwealth of Nations", "Commonwealth country" and "Commonwealth citizenship".<sup>50</sup> While willing to accept republican governments within the Commonwealth, the British however believed that there should be some common bond in the form of a link to the Crown between members, either as defined by the Statute of Westminster for the older members, or through having the president of republican Commonwealth countries function as the representative of the King. A two-tiered Commonwealth, one group of countries maintaining their constitutional relations with the Crown *inter se* as before, with the others enjoying "associated membership status" was rejected, although it was conceded that if unilateral action by India or Ireland before the meeting caused such fragmentation, then such a salvage operation might prove to be a last recourse. Pakistan, which was created at the same time as the Dominion of India, would probably follow India's example in choosing either to remain in or separate from the Commonwealth. Ceylon, whose independence within the Commonwealth in late 1947 with previously negotiated defence and external relations agreements with the United Kingdom, Canada had chosen to consider as *sui generis*, was not likely to act unilaterally either.

---

50. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, memorandum from Heeney to King, "Commonwealth Relationships: Attitude of U.K. Government", 30 August 1948; also copy of United Kingdom paper "Commonwealth Relationship: Statement of General Principles", October 1948.

Kearney at one point even undertook a special journey to Colombo to reassure Ceylonese leaders of Canada's support, in view of repeated Soviet use of the veto to deny Ceylon membership in the United Nations, an action which also afforded the Soviet Union an opportunity to attack "Western imperialism."<sup>51</sup>

Ireland<sup>52</sup> caused some anxiety. John A. Costello, the Irish Prime Minister, visited Ottawa shortly after Brook had departed, and utilized the occasion to announce that Ireland intended to repeal its Executive Authority (External Relations) Act of 1936, which at that time had authorized the King to act on behalf of Ireland with regard to the appointments of diplomatic representatives and conclusion of international agreements. Mackenzie King was horrified that Costello had chosen to make his statement in Ottawa, and even more so by an error in protocol perpetrated by his former department. The menu for the official dinner which came after Costello's news conference, had included toasts to the King and to the President of Ireland, thereby - at least in King's view - lending some legitimacy to the Irish action. The event awakened the Canadian Prime Minister's hibernating spirit of reform: "I began to feel that my real mission might be that of having to do with keeping together the communities that today are part of the British Commonwealth...My own feeling is that reality is more important than appearance."<sup>53</sup>

The officials of the Department of External Affairs were also concerned about the practical consequences of Costello's action. At a meeting of top officials held in Pearson's office on 14 September,

---

51. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, file 2352, memorandum regarding the independence of Ceylon, n.d. (November 1947).

52. The Departmental decision to use the term "Ireland" had been made in 1937. John Holmes noted in March 1948 that it seemed that everyone but Canada was using the term "Eire" and he thought "Ireland" now sounded a trifle pedantic. Escott Reid disagreed: "The Irish Government calls it (sic) Ireland and that is good enough for me." DEA, file 6065-40, Holmes to Reid, 30 March 1948. Also interview with J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980.

53. King Diary, 8 September 1948. King was critical of St. Laurent and Pearson for not being aware of the damage the menu cards might cause. Also Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, memorandum, "The Status of Ireland: The External Relations Act", 9 September 1948.



which included both Robertson and Wrong, it was agreed that the situation had now been altered, and there existed a distinct possibility that the problem of "independence within the Commonwealth" would come up for discussion at the forthcoming meeting. Although Ireland would not be represented at the meeting, India would, and Nehru might argue that the members of the Commonwealth had continued to regard Ireland in practice as a peer - they could therefore not object to India remaining a member on the same basis. Doubts were ventured by all officials present over the feasibility of a vague formula which would allow Indian association with the Commonwealth but which would also not weaken the constitutional ties of the other members. Pakistan, it was noted, appeared to have less desire to weaken the Commonwealth link, and by virtue of its geographic location, given global events, was of greater strategic importance to the western democracies. The overall feeling concerning India, however, was that some bond, no matter how tenuous, should maintain Indian association with the Commonwealth, and, by implication, with the "Western World."<sup>54</sup>

The Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth met in London in mid-October 1948. That there had been a change in prevailing British attitudes since the last meeting was undeniable, as even the King in his speech at Buckingham Palace on 13 October used phrases like "Our Commonwealth" and "My ministers from the Commonwealth" - there was never any mention of "Empire" or "Dominions", or even "British" - much to Churchill's dismay. Joining the representatives of the "older members" at the Cabinet table at 10 Downing Street were those of the new: Pandit Nehru of India, Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan, D.S. Senanayake

---

54. DEA, file 50023-40, memorandum, "Discussion on Prime Ministers' Conference to be held in London on October 11, 1948." The meeting in Pearson's office was attended by Hume Wrong, Norman Robertson (both home on leave), Arnold Heeney, Escott Reid, R.A. MacKay and Alfred Pick. MacKay had replaced Angus, who had returned to academic life, as the departmental "Indian expert", and he and Pick were responsible for most of the preparatory work for the October 1948 and April 1949 Prime Ministers' Meetings. "Subsidiary" constitutional issues were also discussed at this meeting, and of interest is that Pearson favoured a change of title of the "Governor-General" to "Viceroy" or "Regent" because of American misinterpretations. One surmises that such misinterpretations would only have worsened had Pearson's ideas been translated into policy.

of Ceylon and, to foreshadow future Commonwealth difficulties, Sir Godfrey Huggins of Southern Rhodesia. The meetings were largely concerned with economics and finance, the position of the Sterling Area being particularly precarious at the time. European recovery, the inevitable review of foreign and defence policy issues, Commonwealth consultation, and inconclusive deliberations on the status of High Commissioners were also featured. Much to his disappointment and everyone's concern, Mackenzie King spent the greater part of the conference in bed nursing a heart condition, but that did not prevent him from holding court in his suite, where among many visitors, he had occasion to speak to Nehru, and told the Indian Prime Minister of his own concept of a "Community of Free Nations", enhanced by stories of his maternal grandfather.<sup>55</sup> His fears of centralization and dependence had by this time been transferred south of the Canadian border. High Commissioner Norman Robertson replaced the Prime Minister until Louis St. Laurent arrived from Canada.

The two most significant events of the meetings took place informally and away from the conference table. On 17 October, a meeting was held at Chequers between the Ministers of External Affairs and Finance of Ireland on the one hand, and Attlee, Noel-Baker, St. Laurent, Evatt and Fraser on the other. The Irish ministers were insistent that the establishment of genuine friendly relations with the United Kingdom depended upon what they termed the removal of every vestige and every appearance of the former state of dependency. In other words, the External Relations Act would be repealed. To St. Laurent's view that Canada would favour a system based upon retention of the Crown as Head of State for external purposes and British assertions that the United Kingdom would prefer a constitutional rather than a contractual link, the Irish remained adamant, and gave vague assurances about their preference for some form of association. As Robertson concluded in his summary of the meeting, the Irish had given little consideration to the development of a constructive policy.<sup>56</sup>

---

55. King Diary, 13 October 1948.

56. DEA, file 50023-40, cable no. 1831, Robertson to Pearson, 21 October 1948.



Before leaving London, Nehru had prepared a "ten points" memorandum in which he outlined the terms and conditions by which India could remain a member of the Commonwealth. First and foremost, the declaration of status of India as a "sovereign democratic republic" would be left as it was in the draft constitution pending approval by a Congress Party conference; also, in a novel reference to the Crown, the King was designated "the first citizen of the Commonwealth" and its "fountain of honour." Of greatest concern to Canada, in view of its restrictive immigration policies, was Nehru's proposal that either in the constitution or in a separate statute passed at the same time, Indian nationals would be assured of being Commonwealth citizens, as would those nationals of other Commonwealth countries when in India, on a reciprocal basis.<sup>57</sup> A new British nationality act had defined the term "Commonwealth citizen" as being applicable to all British subjects, and had conferred upon them the right to enter and remain in the United Kingdom. Did India expect a similar concession on Canada's part under its new nationality act? Moreover, if, as it seemed certain, Ireland left the Commonwealth, it was unlikely that the intermediary position Irish nationals enjoyed between British subjects and aliens in most Commonwealth countries would be removed. Where would that leave Indian "Commonwealth citizens"? Further, apparent willingness on the part of older Commonwealth members to study methods on how to maintain some relationship with an independent Ireland caused some concern among representatives in New Delhi. "I was afraid that Ireland was being given the same recognition outside the Commonwealth as when she was in it," Kearney noted in his diary, "and that this might have a bad effect on Sir Archibald's (Nye, U.K. High Commissioner) negotiations with India and might tempt India to follow the same course as Ireland."<sup>58</sup> Kearney's uncertainty reflected that felt to a degree in all Commonwealth capi-

---

57. MacKay Papers, vol. 2, file "Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, Correspondence and Memoranda, 1947-48", memorandum by Reid, "Memorandum for the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs", 29 November 1948. Pearson, newly appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs, was campaigning for a seat in the riding of Algoma East, his portfolio ably tended by Brooke Claxton, the Minister of National Defence.

58. John D. Kearney Diary, vol. 1, 26 November 1948.

tals; the Commonwealth could not become a structured and ordered entity, yet there had to be an adequate demonstration of the advantages of membership.

Prospects were bleak for any acceptable solution by the end of 1948. Before the end of the year the Republic of Ireland Bill had been debated and passed by the Dail in Dublin - proclamation would wait until Easter Day 1949, the anniversary of the Easter rising of 1916. In India, the Congress Party had accepted the draft constitution, which would come into effect on 15 August 1949. The Crown would thereafter cease to have any meaning for India and, if there was to be agreement on India's position in the Commonwealth, it would have to come before August. "The problem thus presented is one of intense difficulty and raises far-reaching and fundamental issues," Prime Minister Attlee stated in a message to Prime Minister St. Laurent, "It can only be resolved by the Commonwealth countries in consultation."<sup>59</sup> India could not and would not become another Ireland.

The Commonwealth prime ministers were asked to meet in London in April, their dilemma best elucidated by Peter Fraser of New Zealand:

I have the greatest desire to see India retained in the Commonwealth, but, for the moment, see no satisfactory means of bringing this about. Are the members of the Commonwealth who do wish to retain the Crown to end up with a form of words covering an arrangement which is entirely nebulous? Are we justified in releasing India from the obligations which the rest of us willingly assume without any reasonable accommodation on the part of India in return? These are matters which must be faced frankly and freely around a conference table before a decision is made.<sup>60</sup>

Within the East Block in Ottawa, analysis of possible solutions continued, there being as at Whitehall earlier a proclivity to be mesmerized by the constitutionalities involving the role of the Crown. Sir Norman Brook visited Canada once again on 10 March to impart the current position of the United Kingdom Government. Memoranda which he brought with him suggested that India could be retained in the Commonwealth even without a link to the Crown, through formal

---

59. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 274, file 2783, cable from Attlee to St. Laurent, 25 February 1949.

60. Privy Council Office, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, Fraser to St. Laurent, 24 March 1949.



public declarations of intent of Commonwealth members and India. In view of the grave deterioration of East-West relations and developments in China, the United Kingdom and Canada were as one in their wish to keep India within the Commonwealth not only on strategic grounds, but as a bridge between Asia and the West. Accordingly, the Canadian Cabinet expressed general agreement with British inclinations, but added an important proviso: Canada was fully satisfied with the existing basis of Commonwealth relations and would consider it desirable that India retained some formal link with the Crown, even as a republic. That link should best not address the question of Commonwealth citizenship, the major Canadian concern, unless it was made clear that there would be no change in the *status quo*.<sup>61</sup>

In New Delhi Kearney perceived the problem as having less of a legal nature than an outright political one. He correctly detected in the attitude of the United Kingdom "a disposition to admit India to the Commonwealth without necessarily having any real link with the Crown." It would be wise, he added, as his colleagues in Ottawa knew full well, for Canada to leave all initiatives with the United Kingdom "...and to reserve our position as to whether any arrangement that the United Kingdom may work out directly with India will be acceptable to us."<sup>62</sup>

Nonetheless, Louis St. Laurent sent Pandit Nehru a message in which he outlined Canada's satisfaction with the existing form of association of Commonwealth members and the desire not to have Canada's

---

61. MacKay Papers, vol. 2, file "Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference, London 1949, Correspondence and Memoranda", "Revision by Mr. Heeney of the Memorandum of March 16, 1949, Presented to the Secretary of State for External Affairs on India and the Commonwealth", 17 March 1949. Heeney was now Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs. Reid had served as Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs following Pearson's elevation to the Cabinet.

62. *Ibid.*, despatch no. 132, Kearney to Pearson, 18 March 1949. Kearney was overly wary on another count: "On balance, I am slowly veering to the view that any innocuous phrase regarding the King might just as well be left out. It would certainly make Mr. Nehru's task of joining the Commonwealth with the concurrence of his party a lot easier. If India joins the Commonwealth on such terms as will split the Congress Party, her worth to the Commonwealth will, I fear, be greatly diminished."

traditional relationship with the Crown altered in any way so as to avoid any public misgivings occasioned by the appearance of a weakened role for the Crown. In addition:

The above considerations prompt me to express the sincere hope that you may see your way clear to retaining some link between the sovereign republic of India and the Crown. It seems to me that any alternative presents not only constitutional but real practical difficulties; for example, we might be hard put to defend against foreign objections the continued exchange of trade preferences.<sup>63</sup>

Pearson represented Canada at the London conference, St. Laurent having decided to campaign for the forthcoming election. In his task, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs was ably assisted by Robert MacKay and John Kearney, both of whom had of course been associated with "the Indian problem" for the past few years. On his first evening in London, Pearson had dinner with Noel-Baker, and both men, after discussing the gamut of possible actions and equally possible reactions on the part of other participants, agreed that "[i]t is simply a matter of discovering the lesser of the evils."<sup>64</sup> Pearson met with Nehru on 21 April: "I pointed out to him that we in our turn did not desire in Canada to alter in any way our present connection with the Crown which met our needs and our wishes but that we recognized that India's position in this regard was different." For his part, Nehru said that there was a considerable amount of opposition to any form of Commonwealth association in his country but he appreciated the advantages membership entailed, and significantly, the symbolic value of the Crown. The Indian Prime Minister then gave Pearson a copy of a memorandum which established the Indian position for the conference. Pearson thought the paper represented a sound basis for discussion and possible agreement, the Indian reference to the status of the King in regard to India

---

63. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 274, file 2783, personal message from St. Laurent to Nehru conveyed through Canadian High Commissioner, 31 March 1949. Jules Leger, at this time First Secretary at Canada House, has commented that the personal friendship which developed between Nehru and St. Laurent at the October 1948 meeting was unrivalled. Interview with Jules Leger, 5 September 1980.

64. Pearson Papers, vol. 9, file "Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Meeting, April 1949", cable no. 824, Pearson to Heeney, 21 April 1949.



arising "from the free association of which the King is the symbol and appertains to that association alone."<sup>65</sup>

Such an attitude had not been entirely unexpected, for on 20 April, MacKay had prepared a memorandum which looked closely at the Crown linkage question. Accepting the fact that it now appeared that the Commonwealth had reached the stage of "personal union", that is, where the only formal link in the association was a common monarch, he argued that the King by mutual agreement should be given a title symbolic of his headship of the Commonwealth as a whole - "Titular Head of the Commonwealth" or "Honorary or Royal Patron of the Commonwealth" were possibilities. This recognition of the King would be augmented by reciprocal declarations: India would express its desire to remain in the Commonwealth; the other members would accord formal recognition of India's continued membership. There should be emphasis and mention of historical continuity in the declarations, so as to defend the continuation of "Imperial" preferences and at least some of the aspects of common citizenship which India alone appeared to desire.<sup>66</sup>

The first meeting of all participants took place on the morning of 23 April and lasted two hours. Everyone performed as predicted: Nehru outlined his proposals as indicated in the memorandum which Attlee and Pearson had received earlier; Chifley of Australia expressed his concern that his country's link with the Crown should not be altered or weakened; Fraser of New Zealand echoed his neighbour's sentiments, and added that in current turbulent times interdependence was more important than independence; Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan, ever-wary of his country's security, stated that mere association with the Commonwealth was not enough, a view echoed by Senanayake of Ceylon. All were of course in favour of India remaining in the Commonwealth, but it struck Pearson as curious that the least support for India would come from its neighbours, themselves new members of the Commonwealth. Dr. D.F. Malan, the Prime Minister of South Africa, startled and surprised the meeting, particularly in view of the strained relations

---

65. Pearson Papers, vol. 9, file "Report on Commonwealth Meetings, April 22-27, 1949", "ii. The Indian Proposals".

66. MacKay Papers, vol. 2, memorandum by MacKay, "India and the Commonwealth-Alternative Links", 20 April 1949.

between India and South Africa, by strongly supporting India's continued association with the Commonwealth, its republican constitution notwithstanding. The people of South Africa had not placed the same importance on allegiance to the King as had the other "older members", but they perceived trouble on the international horizon, and did not wish to stand alone. Pearson, who had earlier deferred to allow the prime ministers to speak first, pointed out the adaptability and flexibility which the Commonwealth had often demonstrated in the past and could hopefully do so again. Canada was content with its relationship to the Crown, and did not wish anyone to be given the impression following the conference that the link had been weakened. The Canadian Government accepted the fact that India did not wish to be bound by allegiance and welcomed the Indian statement for close and friendly association with the other members of the Commonwealth and the retention of the King as the symbol of that free association.<sup>67</sup> Pearson would save Canadian anxieties for the still-present and worrisome Indian reference to Commonwealth citizenship for a more appropriate time.

Essentially, the pattern of discussion which followed the first meeting, characterized by all participants remaining consistent with their previously indicated positions, revolved around recommendations made in a draft memorandum by Attlee. The British Prime Minister suggested that there should be two declarations, one on behalf of India which would affirm continued Indian membership in the Commonwealth, the other on behalf of the other Commonwealth members would declare their continued membership and common allegiance to the King, who also served as the symbol of their free association. No one seemed to like Attlee's effort too much, especially the Canadians, who felt it was too formal and not amenable to easy public comprehension. Pearson believed that the two declarations should be combined into one, so as to inspire a greater sense of common purpose, advice which Attlee heeded in presenting another draft to the conference on 25 April. Malan, and to an extent Pearson, voiced their doubts about the use of the term "Head of the Commonwealth", which might be seen

---

67. Pearson Papers, vol. 9, cable no. 838, Pearson to St. Laurent, 23 April 1949.



to imply that the structure of the Commonwealth was being fundamentally altered. Attlee countered by stating that it was certainly not his intention to imply that there would be any new functions for the King, or the creation of a super state for that matter, but a substitute formula was required to define India's position in the Commonwealth.<sup>68</sup>

Lester Pearson, whose role in securing drafting changes became more significant as time passed, became a working member of a drafting team which also included Clement Attlee and Sir Stafford Cripps. After several further meetings to consider the declaration, which featured additional intransigence on the part of Malan to accept the King as "Head of the Commonwealth", Indian impatience at Pakistani efforts to have a provision for "mutual assistance" enshrined in the declaration, as well as the phrase which stated that the Commonwealth "had proved its value as an instrument" - which clearly in Nehru's mind it had not done in the course of Indian history - the declaration appeared to be complete by 27 April. Pearson had, however, managed to get the Canadian point of view across concerning preferential treatment given to Commonwealth citizens. Consideration of an "Agreed Minute on Preferential Treatment with regard to Citizens and Trade" took place at the fourth meeting on 26 April. In what amounted to a re-statement that relations between Commonwealth countries were not exactly foreign, and in that perhaps a re-affirmation of the *inter se* doctrine, the minute stated that each Commonwealth country could take the necessary steps to maintain its right to offer citizens and trade of other member countries "treatment more favourable than that accorded to the nationals and trade of foreign countries." Pearson, doubtlessly aware of Canadian public opinion and perhaps also of recently dashed hopes for liberalization of Canadian-American trade relations, objected to the words "more favourable" as being too provocative, should the minute ever be made public. All that was required, Pearson stressed, was a preservation of the right to follow current practices. As a result of the Canadian intervention the draft was amended to read "to enable it to maintain the right to accord prefer-

---

68. For a more detailed analysis of the evolution of the declaration, see Eayrs, pp. 251-255.

ential treatment as has been customary."<sup>69</sup>

Following some eleventh hour drafting changes, which again dealt with the role of "The King, as the symbol of the free association of the independent member nations, and thus the Head of the Commonwealth" - "thus" was changed to "as such" - the historic Declaration of London was released to the press on the afternoon of 27 April 1949.

The Governments of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon, whose countries are united as Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and owe a common allegiance to the Crown, which is also the symbol of their free association, have considered the impending constitutional changes in India.

The Government of India has informed the other Governments of the Commonwealth of the intention of the Indian people that under the new constitution which is about to be adopted India shall become a sovereign independent republic. The Government of India has however declared and affirmed India's desire to continue her full membership of the Commonwealth of Nations and her acceptance of The King as the symbol of the free association of its independent member nations and as such the Head of the Commonwealth.

The Governments of the other countries of the Commonwealth, the basis of whose membership of the Commonwealth is not hereby changed, accept and recognize India's continuing membership in accordance with the terms of this declaration.

Accordingly the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, India, Pakistan and Ceylon hereby declare that they remain united as free and equal members of the Commonwealth of Nations, freely co-operating in the pursuit of peace, liberty and progress.<sup>70</sup>

Pearson was indefatigable. That same afternoon he made a brief broadcast in which he stated his positive view of the association: "Our Commonwealth of Nations is a dynamic, not a static concept...In diversity and freedom and in the free will to cooperate

---

69. Pearson Papers, vol. 9, "Report on Commonwealth Meetings, April 22-27, 1949", "v. Agreed Minute on Preferential Treatment with Regard to Citizens and Trade."

70. *Ibid.*, "Report on Commonwealth Meetings, April 22-27, 1949."



lies its strength."<sup>71</sup> Now a diplomat turned politician, Pearson was the only participant not a prime minister in attendance at the inner table, and demonstrated a superior skill for conciliation which was already internationally appreciated and which would increase in the ensuing years. Although some informed Canadians believed that India had not gone far enough in pressing its claims,<sup>72</sup> there was general contentment within the Department of External Affairs, and certainly in the government as a whole, in that the potentially explosive public issue of the alteration of the position of the Crown, and an embarrassing illumination of restrictive Canadian immigration policies had been avoided. But there was something more than that. Canada had exercised caution in its attitude to greater Commonwealth membership during the early 1940s, a caution bred from the exigencies of satisfying domestic public opinion and from an innocent unfamiliarity with any global entanglements beyond well-worn North Atlantic patterns. Commonwealth defence had been a somewhat different matter, where Canadian views had solidified into policy through the experience of saying "no." When a qualified "yes" for Commonwealth preservation and change was required during the latter years of the decade, Canada did not hesitate to assume responsibility as the senior member of the Commonwealth to help to ease this change, surely a fitting role, since it was the "Canadian view" of the Commonwealth which had prevailed.

---

71. Pearson Papers, vol. 9, transcript of BBC broadcast by Pearson, 27 April 1949. In his notes Pearson added: "Fortunately the release time here, 2 A.M., made it possible for the Prime Minister to read the Declaration in Ottawa that afternoon and for me to broadcast it over the 10 o'clock news. This meant that in the next morning's papers when the Declaration was released here, there were reports from Ottawa about its reception there and reference to my broadcast. I have the feeling here that some of the people thought that I beat the gun. All I did of course was take advantage of our six hours differential." "Notes on Visit to London, April 19-30, 1949."

72. Edgar Tarr in particular. In a letter to Sir Girja Bajpai, he wrote: "My joy arising out of the settlement is, however, somewhat tempered by the apprehension that India may have conceded too much. My preference was for a declaration by the Prime Ministers to the effect that their countries constituted the Commonwealth of Nations and that the form of any of them, whether republican or monarchical, is a matter of purely domestic concern." Canadian Institute of International Affairs Records / Edgar Tarr Papers, vol. 2, file "India 1935/49", Tarr to Bajpai, 9 May 1949.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONTINENTALISM AND AMERICAN HEMISPHERICS

The nascent Canadian diplomacy of the age, together with the development of middle power status, were but ancillary factors governing Canada's evolving position on the North American continent and in the Western Hemisphere. What mattered most was that the United States had aggressively emerged from its isolationist hemispheric shell to embrace the new world order, significantly this time as both participant and protagonist. During the 1940s, Canadian-American relations were but a small portion of this grand American global reconversion, yet to Canada these relations became all-pervasive by the end of the decade. To analyze and disentangle the gamut of issues comprising the continental relationship during this period is at best an onerous task and well beyond the scope of this study. Much of the tenor of Canadian-American relations has already permeated earlier chapters. Instead, this chapter will endeavour to examine several pertinent areas, in the way of sketching an overview, and will include some general aspects of Canada's political relations with the United States; an analysis of Canada's changing position in the Western



hemisphere, particularly Canada's relationship with Latin America and the prospect of membership in the Pan-American Union; and lastly, offer some commentary on continental economic and commercial issues. Throughout, the views of Ottawa's policy-makers, particularly those resident in the Department of External Affairs, will be observed.

\* \* \*

"In the nature of things," John Bartlet Brebner has written, "It is mere common sense to build upon past experience of international association . . . the experience of naturally interlocked nations can school people and their statesmen for larger international responsibilities."<sup>1</sup> During the 1940s, Canadian policy-makers tended to share Brebner's thesis, for in their view Canada had evolved into an interlocutor, arbiter, or much-vaunted "lynch-pin" between the interests of the United Kingdom on the one hand and the United States on the other. It was also their pious hope that such a role would assume greater significance in the multilateral future which beckoned at war's end. However central to Canada's interests the maintenance of a separate symbiotic existence of its own with both greater powers was, before the end of the decade what had long been forecast had finally become fact - in the most realistic of geopolitical and economic terms, it was Canada's relationship with the United States which would assume greatest importance from now on.

In Louis St. Laurent's Gray Memorial Lecture at the University of Toronto in January 1947, in which he endeavoured to articulate the foundations of Canada's foreign policy, he stated that it was not at all customary for Canadians to think in terms of actually having a policy with respect to the United States. Bilateral relations with the Southern neighbours were, he argued, more than "mere empirical neighbourliness", and the solving of those mutual problems which occasionally surfaced. Instead, the continental relationship was characterized by evolving forms of negotiation, arbitration and compromise, together with a willingness to "...consider the possibility

---

1. John Bartlet Brebner, *North Atlantic Triangle; The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain*, introduction by Donald G. Creighton, Carleton Library Series #30, (Toronto, 1945, 1966), p. 335.

of common action for constructive ends."<sup>2</sup> These were hardly words designed to captivate his audience, yet they probably came closest to defining the essence of Canadian policy during the period, or, for that matter, ever since.

The translation of a nebulous policy of good-will into affirmative action of lasting benefit to Canada was exceedingly difficult during the 1940s. Canada, Escott Reid bluntly stated in a 1942 memorandum, takes "a positive pleasure in trying not to influence the course of history", and this taciturn approach was the reason for Ottawa's failure to accept "adult" responsibilities in its relations with Washington.<sup>3</sup> To an extent Reid was correct. As elucidated in the initial chapter, it was not until late 1943 that the Canadian Legation in Washington was elevated to the level of an embassy - and then seemingly only as a reflexive response to similar Latin-American actions. Also complicating matters was the fact that Canada's representatives to the United States, with the exception of Loring Christie's brief tenure as Minister from 1939 to 1941, were invariably political appointees who demonstrated little interest in the policy workings of the State Department. Although Leighton McCarthy, who served as Minister and first ambassador to the United States for the greater part of the war until Lester Pearson's accession to the post in early 1945, had the tremendous advantage of being counted among President Roosevelt's personal friends, the loyalty the friendship inspired on McCarthy's part did not always resonate with his own deeply pro-British sentiments, to say nothing of views emanating from the East Block in Ottawa.<sup>4</sup>

- 
2. DEA, Statements and Speeches Series, No. 47/2, "The Foundation of Canadian Policy in World Affairs; Address by the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent, Secretary of State for External Affairs, inaugurating the Gray Foundation Lectureship at Toronto University, January 13, 1947."
  3. Reid Papers, vol. 6, memorandum, "The United States and Canada: Domination, Cooperation, Absorption", 12 January 1942.
  4. In one instance, Pearson was horrified when McCarthy requested his comments on a speech which ended "A British subject I was born, a British subject I will die." Pearson Diary, 6 January 1943.



Problems of liaison in Washington went further. Nominally second-in-command to McCarthy, Pearson had neither the time - by virtue of other commitments such as his presidency of the Supply Committee of UNRRA - nor the representational allowances to devote himself fully to the potentially rewarding task of State Department liaison. One must view the Canadian mission in Washington at the time as being essentially a microcosm of the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa: woefully understaffed for the sheer volume of work it was expected to produce. After stoically bearing the weight of State Department liaison responsibilities for several years, Pearson ventured to suggest that a counsellor with such duties be appointed.<sup>5</sup> The staffing problems improved shortly thereafter.

What diplomatic liaison there was suffered from two basic inhibiting factors, which seemed to become more worrisome as the war progressed. The first, at least in the Canadian view, was a disposition amongst American officials and politicians to assume that there were no conflicts at all in the bilateral relationship, which in their minds seemed to be relegated to the status of domestic concern. It was expected that Canada would "go along" with the United States in its altruistic plans for future international organizations without question, and, as demonstrated in earlier chapters, the Americans never really did accept the middle power status which Canada so assiduously sought during these years. Secondly, although there was an acknowledgement of the frequent Canadian role as interlocutor between Britain and the United States, this valued role, of such symbolic domestic political significance, particularly to Mackenzie King, was at times of necessity or convenience overlooked by the United States - there being no traditional consultative mechanism as with the United Kingdom - in its preoccupation with grander questions stemming from the turbulent tide of international events.

Lester Pearson, by virtue of his own outstanding abilities together with his prominent presence in Washington during the latter war years, was perhaps in a better position to provide articulate comments on American foreign policy than most. His lucid and often

---

5. Pearson Papers, Pre-1948 Series, vol. 2, Pearson to Robertson, 30 October 1944.

amusing diaries of the time attest to his own rather perplexed state. Amazed at how Americans could be both liberal and isolationist at the same time, and in so doing reflect views accepted in part by Washington's decision-makers, Pearson concluded in early 1943 that "American policy after this war is not going to be much more intelligent than it was after the last. The fact of the matter is that most Americans are natural isolationists, and only international co-operators in an emergency."<sup>6</sup> He perceived a form of neoisolationism to be in the works, which, in itself an admission that American could not secure immunity from danger by turning inwards, was premised on the sheer global might of the United States. Such strength could breed domination without acceptance of international responsibilities and would shape the policy of other countries.<sup>7</sup> Needless to add, the emergence of such a power to the south would of course be of fundamental concern to Canada, which through the application of its functional principle wished to be treated in a manner proportionate to its own efforts and status.

Pearson adopted a more qualified point of view following the San Francisco Conference and subsequent American congressional ratification of the United Nations Charter. Whereas optimism could then be cautiously allowed in observing the multilateral aspects of United States foreign policy, its bilateral dimension became a focus of concern in Pearson's writings. His exasperation surfaced in a letter to Norman Robertson following a meeting with President Truman and a prominent senator:

Both gentlemen closed my visit by (*sic*) emphatic statements that Canada was the great friend of the United States and if only all countries were as reasonable and neighbourly as we were, how much better the world would be. As I have said many times before, this approach is all very gratifying, but makes it somewhat more difficult for us to impress on our friends here that there are, nevertheless, Canadian-American problems, the solution of which is sometimes not made easier by the American tendency to treat us as another State of the Union, but one without congressional representation; a kind of external District of Columbia.<sup>8</sup>

---

6. Pearson Diary, 14 January 1943.

7. DEA, file 4901-40C, Pearson to Robertson, 6 January 1943.

8. Pearson to Robertson, 2 March 1945, copy of letter in Pearson Diary.



Although diplomatic participants and political observers alike believed that irritants had developed in the bilateral relationship, the extent of successful cooperation between both countries was monumental. Of overriding significance was the combined war effort, which, following the establishment of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence in August 1940 and the signing of the Hyde Park Agreement in April 1941, reflected close coordination in both military and economic production matters. The activities of numerous boards in joint venture production, while occasioning both bickering and frequent headaches in terms of either country's attempts at coherent policy formulation, had the decided advantage of further broadening the spectrum of trans-border contacts.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the incident which most bruised feelings and generated acute embarrassment on both sides of the border occurred in December 1941 when the war theatre was suddenly brought to Canada through the occupation of St. Pierre and Miquelon, two French islands off the coast of Newfoundland, by Vice-Admiral E.-H. Muselier of the Free French forces. In retrospect, the sequence of events and resultant diplomatic embroglio appear almost comic, but there were grave fears at the time that these strategically important islands would be utilized by the Vichy Government to subvert convoy movements across the Atlantic. When Muselier took the islands, after having first consulted with Canada and agreeing to undertake no such action, the United States, not at the time overly enamoured with General de Gaulle's Free French forces, placed the blame squarely on Canada, Secretary of State Cordell Hull going so far as to enquire by press release what measures the Canadian Government would be prepared to undertake to restore the *status quo*. Prime Minister Mackenzie King, annoyed with both the French and the Americans, the former for breaking their word with the knowledge that a Canadian expeditionary force was on alert for such an engagement, the latter for issuing an ultimatum that Canada expel the French,

---

9. Again, not without problems. According to General Maurice Pope, trans-border contacts of a civilian nature dealing with war materials often lacked military expertise. More coordination was required. Pope Papers, vol. 2, Pope to Pearson, 29 August 1944.

firmly denied Canadian responsibility for or complicity in the affair. In any event the State Department was embarrassed when American public opinion reacted angrily to the press release. As it happened, the new order did prevail, Canadian policy-makers realizing however that "there is very little we can do to influence American policy in this matter."<sup>10</sup> Some rancour remained and while in late 1944 the then American ambassador to Canada, Ray Atherton, would admit that American handling of the incident had been rather misguided, he did so in such a fashion as to leave Norman Robertson with the distinct impression that "...if we had kept in closer touch with the State Department we would always have agreed with them."<sup>11</sup>

If the tone of "action before consultation", with consequent unease in Ottawa was set by the St. Pierre and Miquelon affair, then the presence of some 46,000 American military and civilian personnel in the Canadian North-West by 1943, compared to one-seventh that amount of Canadian personnel, was unsettling indeed. Canadian sovereignty, it was believed, appeared to be threatened. Provision had been made in the Ogdensburg Agreement for military cooperation between the United States and Canada, including the construction of "aerodromes" for a North-West Staging Route. Similarly, the "Canol" project, which was designed to produce oil from a field at Norman Wells to meet American needs for the staging route, also greatly augmented construction in the region and brought more American labour north.

Ironically, it was the British High Commissioner, Malcolm MacDonald, who managed to focus if not galvanize Canadian anxieties. As part of MacDonald's need to explore his vast country of accreditation, he journeyed to western Canada in the spring of 1943. Upon return, the High Commissioner reported his grave concerns in a brief memorandum which eventually surfaced in the Canadian Cabinet War Committee:

---

10. Pearson Papers, vol. 1, Pearson to Massey, 9 January 1943.

11. DEA, file 71(s), Robertson to Pearson, 24 October 1944. For a precise account of the entire incident, see C.P. Stacey, *Arms, Men & Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945*, (Ottawa, 1970), pp. 370-3.



The Americans are doing the greater part of the planning and execution...at present at any rate the Canadian authorities have too little influence on the shaping of these affairs in Canadian territory. The situation even seems so disturbing that I venture to write this personal, informal and frank note on the subject.<sup>12</sup>

MacDonald suggested that the cause for American aggressiveness stemmed from feuding between the War and State Departments in Washington, a popular Foreign Office view; in the Department of External Affairs, Hugh Keenleyside, perhaps the officer most familiar with the matter, held the opinion that the problem arose from the basic United States army conception of the prerogatives of a Commander-in-the-Field.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, the extent of Canadian concern was emphasized less than a month later through the establishment of the office of Special Commissioner for Defence Projects in the North-West, a position which would centralize Canadian authority in the region and delegate such powers from Ottawa in a manner which would ensure that Canada's sovereign interests would be upheld.

To be sure, there were other sources of friction between Canada and the United States, often emanating from the conflict between the concept that "the American way" was by definition the best way on the one hand and Canada's need to assert visible independence in its policy actions on the other. Minor contretemps involving the sale of wheat, boundary regulation and the activities of commercial enterprises fell into this category, but they were not beyond resolution through the evolving forms of negotiation, arbitration and compromise with which St. Laurent had characterized the essence of the bilateral relationship.

In Mackenzie King's view, the extent and harmony of the combined continental war effort, particularly defence cooperation as defined under the Ogdensburg Agreement, an exemplary demonstration of neighbourly cooperation, served as one of his most astute political accomplishments. However he continually entertained suspicions of the ultimate North American desires of the United States. Would enhanced

---

12. DEA, file 52-B(s), "M.M.", "Note on Developments in North-Western Canada", 6 April 1943.

13. DEA, file 52-B(s), memorandum by Hugh Keenleyside, "United States Activities in North-Western Canada", 9 April 1943.

continental integration, which to him seemed inevitable, if not in strict economic terms welcome, be consistent with the role which Canada aspired to win for itself in the post-war world? Could Canada expand its relationship with its great neighbour to the south, strengthen its own hemispheric roots as an American nation and still emerge a credible middle power? The Prime Minister espoused a view that all was possible, and what was more, Canada would maintain its link with tradition in becoming "the greatest of nations of the British Commonwealth."<sup>14</sup>

We shall return to the politico-economic queries posed above in due course, as they are of central importance to Canada's relationship with the United States during the decade. However, it will prove beneficial to first examine Canada's developing affiliations with Latin America, in itself somewhat of a departure from the established pattern.

\* \* \*

Canada, as both a nation of the British Commonwealth and one situated in the Americas, found itself at a sort of a crossroads during the war. The juxtaposition of its constitutional and historic ties with the motherland, combined with the significance generated by the emergence of a new and hemispheric brand of Monroe Doctrine to the south, added a dialectical dimension to Canadian foreign policy. In other words, while a search for countervailing forces to the power of the United States was not an expressed tenet of Canadian policy, it was nonetheless in existence, exemplified by Canada's own broadening multilateral and regional interests.

The development of Canada's relations with Latin America came not as a result of some single-minded policy nor campaign - indeed the Prime Minister never had great love for any Latin Americans - but perhaps out of an evolving desire to achieve greater influence in a geographic region peculiar to Canada. Conversely it must be stated that this was a reciprocal sentiment, as the Latin-Americans sought to broaden their own horizons, though in a more obvious manner. For them, membership in the League of Nations had been an effective multilateral counterweight to the domination of the United States; in their

---

14. King Diary, 30 December 1942.



view the legacy of the war would be a new and unknown international organization, in this instance including a more powerful United States of America.

For Canada, trade and later security became the basis of the relationship with Latin America. In the short term, Canada hoped to find compensatory markets for those lost in Europe as well as dollar exchange and sources of supply. As the war progressed, and certainly in the immediate post-war period, the economic problems which Canada shared with other American states such as productivity, secondary industry and transportation were accentuated; future trade with these countries could help resolve some of these endemic difficulties. In addition, the fall of France and shipping losses in the Caribbean forced Canada to cast a wider eye to include an examination of hemispheric defence. The Permanent Joint Board on Defence, after all, only looked after the northern half.<sup>15</sup>

Whereas Canada gingerly and as a result of relegated priorities perhaps haphazardly inched its way toward closer diplomatic ties with Latin American countries, these nations in their turn favoured a more direct approach. For example, in 1943, Dr. Oswaldo Aranha, the Brazilian Foreign Minister, appealed to what he quite correctly judged to be susceptible sentiments in Canadian policy-making circles: "Brazilians also consider that Canada is a help and a comfort to them in dealing with the United States of America."<sup>16</sup> Although the "Canada as mediator" chord had been sounded, the functionalists in Ottawa did not wish to be enticed. To them mediation mattered more when it could be conducted between great powers.

Similarly, the representational aspects of diplomacy suffered from neglect. Exchanges of diplomatic missions, as well as high-level visits either to or from Canada were actively discouraged by Canadian representatives in Washington and officials in Ottawa.

---

15. This at least was the Foreign Office view. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, A1907/616/51, paper prepared by R.A. Humphreys of the Foreign Office Research Department, "Canadian Relations with the Pan-American Union", 18 February 1943.

16. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, A8849/2811/51, despatch from Sir Noel Charles, U.K. ambassador to Brazil, 14 September 1943.

Mackenzie King, in his capacity of Secretary of State for External Affairs, only agreed to see Latin-American envoys on rare occasions; diplomats as a matter of course made their demarches to the Under-Secretary or to the small American and Far Eastern Division. In 1944, H.L. Keenleyside, who bore the title of Assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, headed this division, and was ably assisted by R.M. Macdonnell, as well as by F.H. Soward and H.S. Ferns, both of whom had been seconded to the Department as Special Assistants. Not one of the officers was solely charged with Latin-American questions, since there was the Far East to consider as well, although Soward's major responsibility was in the field. One is left with the impression that despite the lower level of importance attached to relations with Latin America, the Department of External Affairs was sorely understaffed to manage even those contacts which existed.

Canadian interest in Latin America had traditionally been of a commercial variety, as several Canadian companies had pursued considerable investment activities from the time of the First World War. Decidedly the greatest was the Brazilian Traction, Light and Power Company, a firm with majority Canadian ownership, which controlled tramway, power, telephone and gas companies in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. Assets at the end of 1942 totalled some \$394 million, far surpassing, for example, those of any British company active in Latin America.<sup>17</sup> Several other Canadian firms were involved in public utilities in the region, as well as in the mining and petroleum industries. Canadian banks were also well-represented, and of some 53 chartered bank branches situated in Latin America in 1942, 30 were located in Cuba, the Royal Bank of Canada operating the other branches in Colombia, Argentina, Venezuela, Peru, Uruguay and Brazil. Business must have been quite healthy, since the Inspector General of Banks was of the opinion that the Latin-American branches of the chartered banks were above the Canadian average in their money-making capabilities.<sup>18</sup>

During the war years, despite burgeoning trade, the bilateral balance of trade tended to favour Latin America, as traditional Cana-

---

17. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, memorandum by F.H. Soward, "Report on Canadian Representation in and Relations with Latin American States", 17 April 1944. This company has since become BRASCAN International and has been nationalized.

18. *Ibid.*



dian exports of farm machinery, other metal manufactures and rubber goods were diverted into war production. Newsprint was the sole exception, exports to Latin America actually increasing during this period. However Canadian imports of crude petroleum, coffee and fruit increased disproportionately. The higher volume of trade, as well as the potential for strong markets following the war, prompted a marathon Canadian trade mission of several months duration led by J.A. MacKinnon, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, in the autumn of 1941. This effort, unique in that such a tour had never been undertaken before, in addition to the fact that it took place at a time of war, did not provoke immediate signatures on Canadian contracts but served as more of a commercial familiarization and publicity exercise for all concerned. As a result, it provided at least a glimpse of a Canadian sovereign presence, and made the hosts aware of Canada's war effort. Canadian trade promotion activities in South America had thus far been traditionally assisted by British trade commissioners in the region.<sup>19</sup>

Commercial relations were not without their problems, as would be expected in a market which gave virtually unlimited and well-protected access to products from the United States. In those cases where Canada had negotiated most-favoured-nation treaties with clauses allowing Canadian freedom of action with respect to British Commonwealth countries or where the British trading umbrella automatically took Canadian interests into consideration, competition was at best a laborious affair, plagued by the manner by which the British connection was deftly exploited by the United States through subtle references to the fraternal bond of American republics. Further, the United States had entered into incredibly favourable trade treaties which Canada could never hope to match. The United States-Cuba Trade Treaty, for example, allowed for rebates as high as 70 per

---

19. Escott Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 5, Diary of 1941 Canadian Trade Mission to South America. Reid, who accompanied MacKinnon, believed the trip was too long but came to the conclusion that the South Americans desired closer ties with Canada both economically through most-favoured-nation trade agreements, and politically, since it was felt Canada was destined to play an active role in hemispheric politics following the war. Also interview with the Right Honourable Jules Leger, 5 September 1980.

cent of the normal tariff. Nonetheless, Canada's sizeable commercial interests in Latin America were recognized by both the United States and United Kingdom in wartime consultations concerning the black-listing of and later economic warfare against Latin-American firms which were found to be dealing with the Axis powers.<sup>20</sup>

The onset of the war brought semblances of a more coordinated effort by Canada to expand its relationship with Latin America into other fields of endeavour. A modest publicity campaign, mounted by Canadian embassies in South America, which numbered three by mid-war, and assisted by the Wartime Information Board, which had its own Latin-American section, sought to elicit some understanding in these countries of Canada's participation in the war. It was hoped that such an effort would help to clarify that most difficult and unexplainable of questions, the constitutional status of Canada within the British Commonwealth. Cultural publicity and activities were pursued by the Canadian ambassador *in situ*, Jean Désy in Brazil probably being the most energetic in this respect.<sup>21</sup> In Ottawa, an interdepartmental committee, comprising representatives of the Departments of External Affairs, Trade and Commerce, the Wartime Information Board and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, was formed in 1942 to coordinate the dissemination of information about Canada and the war in Latin America. In the event, this Committee met only irregularly, "there not being sufficient new publicity to justify monthly meetings as was originally suggested."<sup>22</sup> Although the Latin-Americans were well-represented in Ottawa, one must conclude that the public affairs aspect of their work was ineffectual, and did not, with the possible exception of Argentina's pro-Axis sympathies, merit attention in the Canadian press.

---

20. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, memorandum by F.H. Soward, "Report on Canadian Representation in and Relations with Latin American States", 17 April 1944.

21. Canada entered into a cultural exchange agreement with Brazil in 1944. Désy's British colleague commented that he had met with outstanding success and had established a respected position for himself and his country in Brazil. "His French characteristics have affinities with Brazilian temperament." Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, A8849/281/51, Charles to Eden, 14 September 1943.

22. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, memorandum by F.H. Soward, "Report on Canadian Representation in and Relations with Latin American States", 17 April 1944.



In a 1944 Gallup Poll, 72 per cent of those Canadians polled revealed that they had never heard of the Pan-American Union nor knew its purpose.<sup>23</sup> The public's gaze had traditionally been fixed upon the North Atlantic triangle, and through the American media, more recently on the war in the Pacific. This focus was largely shared within the Department of External Affairs, and indeed several high-placed civil servants believed that the establishment of consulates or trade missions in important cities in the United States should be a prerequisite to establishing a more visible diplomatic profile in Latin America, which generally seemed to share few of Canada's global interests.<sup>24</sup>

However, concerns for the development of the post-war world order, and Canada's place therein, as well as a more pronounced regional role taken by the United States, caused policy-makers to again contemplate closer linkage with the Pan-American Conference of Foreign Ministers, or Pan-American Union, as the entire organization was called. Arguments for a Canadian membership of sorts had been held in abeyance for the past twenty years, turned aside by either Canadian anxiety as to what responsibilities association would engender, or a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the United States at having a "Dominion amongst the republics."<sup>25</sup>

As early as 1928, when the Pan-American Conference met at Havana, there had been a Latin American initiative to extend an invitation to Canada to take part. At the time, Frank Kellogg, the American Secretary of State, informed the Canadian Minister in Washington, none other than Vincent Massey, that the United States would be pleased to see Canada as a member of the Pan-American Union but that Canada's position in the British Empire could pose difficulties. In 1936, before the advent of a similar meeting of foreign ministers at

---

23. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, memorandum by F.H. Soward, "Report on Canadian Representation in and Relations with Latin American States", 17 April 1944.

24. Interview with the Honourable J.W. Pickersgill, 28 May 1980.

25. There had been no objection from any quarter to Canadian participation in inter-American bodies which were of a technical nature, most notably the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (1931), the Inter-American Radio Office (1940), and the Inter-American Statistical Institute (1943).

Buenos Aires, the American position was unequivocal: while the United States did not wish to make any suggestion as to what Canadian policy should be respecting entry into the Union, it would support such a proposal with great pleasure.

A consistent view on this question on the part of the United States was not to be, however, as in December 1941 then Secretary of State Sumner Welles informed Hume Wrong in Washington that in President Roosevelt's view, an invitation to Canada to be present at the Pan-American Conference at Rio de Janeiro in a month's time could not be supported. The position of the United States in the Pan-American Union, it was then argued, was based upon fraternal agreements between member countries, thus rendering participation by governments other than American republics impossible. Welles also seemed certain that several Latin American nations would oppose participation by Canada because of its "Dominion status" - not that any country including the United States knew precisely what the term meant - but agreed to raise the question in unofficial fashion at the conference. Welles later informed his Canadian interlocutors that he had discovered sufficient varying opinions among the Latin-Americans to mitigate against any invitation being extended to Canada at the present time. In Ottawa, rejection in such an off-hand manner was not taken without some bitterness at least by some within the Department of External Affairs; numerous Latin-Americans had made similarly unofficial approaches to their peers to the contrary and had indeed conveyed their desire to have Canada in attendance at further meetings directly to Canadian representatives in both Washington and Ottawa.

By 1943 American policy had lurched once again, President Roosevelt himself this time telling Leighton McCarthy that the United States would welcome Canadian observer status in the Pan-American Union for the duration of the war, a status which Canada has unfailingly maintained since.<sup>26</sup> In 1947, Senator Arthur Vandenberg, who, with the advent of the Marshall Plan, had maintained the high profile which had stood him in such good stead at the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations, pointed at the vacant chair embla-

---

26. In December 1982, a Parliamentary Committee recommended that Canadian membership in the Organization of American States, the successor to the Pan-American Union, would be desirable. A decision remains in abeyance.



zoned with the Canadian coat of arms which had in apparent foresight been included when the Pan-American Building was erected in Washington in 1910:

By every rule of righteousness she is eligible to this association. By every rule of reason we would wish her here. I would welcome the final and total new world unity which will be nobly dramatized when the twenty-second chair is filled and our continental brotherhood is complete from the Arctic Circle to Cape Horn.<sup>27</sup>

Righteousness, reason and continental brotherhood notwithstanding, in Ottawa the denizens of the East Block, as their political masters, had exhibited few firm opinions on the issue either way, and for his part the Prime Minister in typical and probably wise fashion chose to employ his well-honed obfuscatory skills. When Wrong had met with Welles in 1941, Mackenzie King wrote that he was not at all surprised by Roosevelt's usage of a narrow legalistic position concerning Canadian participation at the Rio Conference, that he could see the President was preoccupied with related thoughts, such as that the United Kingdom might be disposed to take advantage of the situation and in turn attempt to influence United States' policy in the region. To Wrong's suggestion, echoed by Robertson, that he personally take the question up with the President, the Prime Minister adopted a rather sanguine attitude: a message should be relayed to Roosevelt indicating that King fully understood his rationale and that Canadian interest in the conference had stemmed solely from a desire to encourage cooperation between the United States and South America.<sup>28</sup> Whether or not the President, or for that matter, the State Department, would accept such a pronouncement was moot, the Canadian approach to membership in the Pan-American Union was to continue to be decidedly cautious and unobtrusive. Mackenzie King, as usual attributing significance to public awareness, or in this case an evident lack thereof, had voiced the official position in the House of Commons two years earlier and there the matter appeared to rest:

---

27. Privy Council Office, RG2/18 Series, vol. 75, file D-19-20, untitled background memorandum for Cabinet on Pan-American Union, Section II, Part I, "The Previous Attitude of the United States, 1924-47", n.d., (August, 1947).

28. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 310, file 3309, memorandum, Robertson to King, 17 December 1941.

Public opinion in favour of some such course has undoubtedly increased in recent years. I do not, however, consider that it has become sufficiently wide-spread, or sufficiently informed and mature, to warrant immediate steps in that direction. It is a possibility which should be given consideration in the future, along with other means, trade and governmental, of bringing about closer relationships between our country and these countries which are destined to play an increasingly significant part in the world's affairs.<sup>29</sup>

Within the Department of External Affairs, however, the issue could not be so simply evaluated, and although there was not what might be termed a strict departmental view, other than the official one of course, there existed great diversity of opinion. Hugh Keenleyside, for example, in his capacity as Assistant Under-Secretary responsible for Latin-American affairs, had consistently argued in favour of Canadian participation in Pan-American conferences of foreign ministers. In a rather strident memorandum prior to the Rio Conference of 1942, Keenleyside stated that the meeting had been convened for the purpose of coordinating hemispheric defence and hence would be of vital interest to Canada. It would seem absurd for Canada, which had for two years been fighting what had become a common foe, to be absent from a meeting specifically designed to consider means by which the enemy could be defeated. Involvement in such hemispheric discussions would follow quite naturally from the Ogdensburg Agreement. In the event of a call for mobilization of the resources of the hemisphere, the Hyde Park Agreement could also be extended to encompass the hemisphere. In addition, Canada could assist the United States and other allies in bringing pressure to bear on the as yet non-belligerent countries of the hemisphere. According to Keenleyside, the only rational arguments against Canadian participation would be the difficulty of forming a suitable delegation and the possibility of getting into defence commitments involving Latin-American partners.<sup>30</sup>

---

29. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, vol. 3, 30 March 1939, pp. 2420-1. Before the 1941 Rio Conference King would add that Canada as a belligerent could not very well request an invitation for membership of an organization which was chiefly comprised of neutral countries, including at the time the United States. *Debates*, vol. 3, 6 August 1940, p. 2540.

30. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 310, file 3309, Keenleyside, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs", 11 December 1941.



Both concerns were of course central to Mackenzie King's thinking, as his own minutes on the Keenleyside memorandum demonstrated. A high-profile Canadian delegation, as would undoubtedly be warranted, would garner publicity at a time when it was unclear where public opinion rested. Furthermore, the entire concept of enduring defence commitments of any sort, other than those recently developed with the United States, was anathema to Mackenzie King's philosophy of international relations, there being more than enough instances during his long tenure as Prime Minister to confirm his views.

In response to a request for comments on the subject from Keenleyside, General Maurice Pope in Washington focussed on the defensive and security aspect which Canadian membership in the Pan-American Union would entail. A Canadian decision to join the Inter-American Defence Board, a sub-organization of the Pan-American Union which had recently come into being, would per force necessitate adherence to the whole. However, Pope was finely attuned to prevailing State Department concerns, where in some quarters it was feared that Canadian admission would bring with it an element of the outside world, which, in addition to everything else, would be non-American. He commented further that whereas the Permanent Joint Board on Defence possessed a sound *raison d'être*, there would be no real significance in a Canadian military relationship with Bolivia or Guatemala. Pope deemed the entire question to be of the political variety best avoided and passed it on to Lester Pearson, who perhaps wisely chose to let the matter rest in his bulging pending file. In the same letter to Keenleyside, Pope in more telling fashion expressed the evolution of thought on the subject which had occurred among his colleagues in Ottawa:

There was a time when I should have looked upon Canada's entry into the Pan American Union as a form of apostasy. But time works its changes. Indeed, change, political as well as otherwise, seems to be a natural law. The idea no longer shocks me. We form part of this Continent (*sic*) and this being so I see no reason why we should not at the appropriate time join our neighbourhood club. I do not in the slightest fear that such a step would weaken the intra-Imperial connection. No more so than the fact that our attending different churches on Sunday in no way militates against our intimate and effective collaboration during the other days of the week.<sup>31</sup>

---

31. Maurice Pope Diaries, vol. 1, letter from Pope to Keenleyside, 15 April 1942 in response to Keenleyside to Pope, 12 April 1942.

If within the hierarchy of the Department of External Affairs there existed tacit approval but no overt enthusiasm for eventual Canadian adherence to the Pan-American Union, and if Keenleyside was perceived as the greatest proponent of such union, then from London Vincent Massey was surely its greatest detractor. The High Commissioner wrote copiously on the subject from 1945 onward, prefacing each rumination with a disclaimer stating that his views were acquired while Canadian representative in Washington over a decade earlier. More likely than not his personal views of the British Commonwealth, reinforced during his tenure in London, moulded his opinions.

Massey developed convincing arguments. In response to the frequently expressed view that adherence to the Pan-American Union would substantially increase trade between Canada and the Latin-American countries, Massey stated that such an assertion was fallacious, as Canada would continue to develop its commerce with the region as heretofore: through direct trade and diplomatic representation.<sup>32</sup> Bearing in mind the importance of Canada's international status, Massey cautioned that it would be more prudent to consider membership after "a period of zealous and unanimous courtship...rather than to apply again, cap in hand." Canada had insisted on equality of status for all members of the Commonwealth; in the larger Pan-American Union, Canada could conceivably find equality with Paraguay, certainly not with the United States. Further, Massey argued, Canada had consistently opposed the establishment of a Commonwealth Secretariat, most recently in defeating Australian Prime Minister John Curtin's proposal at the Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in 1944, yet the Pan-American Union was in essence a secretariat, membership thus having similar ramifications for Canadian sovereignty. As there existed no geographic, strategic, cultural or political unity within the Americas, "unless one believes that the Isthmus of Panama has some mystic significance", Canada's participation would inevitably be premised on the most tenuous if not artificial of terms. Massey thought relations with the Latin-Americans had traditionally been con-

---

32. Also, there was no evidence that any member country had increased its trade with any other through the machinery of inter-American organization. DEA, Washington Embassy Files, vol. 2128, despatch No. A54, Massey to King, 22 February 1945.



ducted in their own preferred rhetorical fashion, a manner which was apparently alien to the more high-minded and sophisticated Canadians.<sup>33</sup>

For all of Massey's crusading fervour, and it was indeed considerable,<sup>34</sup> he correctly identified the single greatest concern of policy-makers in Ottawa which could ensue from Canadian membership in the Pan-American Union: the Canadian position on issues which divided the United States from the other republics. Without being a member, Canada could afford to maintain a position of dignified aloofness, however, "We should find it very difficult", Massey wrote, "to avoid joining with Latin America in an anti-United States attitude on the one hand or on the other being classed (*sic*) simply as a puppet of Washington."<sup>35</sup>

In the aggregate, views within the Department of External Affairs on the issue tended to fall betwixt and between the Keenleyside and Massey extremes. In Washington, Lester Pearson became a repeated nay-sayer to numerous Latin-American invitations for Canadian membership, duly informing his interlocutors that such a question could not be considered at the present time, as Canada preferred to observe how plans for the world organization and its relationship to regional groupings would be developed at San Francisco.<sup>36</sup>

As a previous chapter has shown, Latin-American proposals on this relationship were politely ignored in Ottawa as not meriting sufficient interest to Canada at the time. Personally, Pearson favoured Canadian adherence to the Pan-American Union and was intrigued

---

33. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 387, Massey to Robertson, 19 March 1945.

34. Massey would go on to write a persuasive article in *Maclean's* magazine which won him the praise of Brooke Claxton, himself a leading Cabinet proponent for Canadian membership in the Pan-American Union. See Vincent Massey, "Should Canada Join the Pan-American Union?", *Maclean's* (15 August 1947), pp. 22, 44-47. Also Claxton Papers, vol. 56, Claxton to Massey, 4 November 1947. Claxton informed Massey that the Prime Minister had in Cabinet referred to the article as "a first class piece of work."

35. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, despatch no. A54, Massey to King, 22 February 1945.

36. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, Pearson to Robertson, 17 March 1945.

by pro-union economic arguments emanating from Canadian universities as to the potential benefits which could accrue to Canada in the event of membership.<sup>37</sup>

The two men whose views mattered most in Ottawa, Norman Robertson and Hume Wrong, eschewed enthusiasm of any kind, choosing to adopt a cool, rational approach. When in 1943 the United Kingdom requested its High Commissioner in Ottawa to enquire about Canadian views concerning entry into the Pan-American Union, Malcolm MacDonald reported that Robertson and Wrong appeared sceptical. In response to MacDonald's explanation that the Foreign Office believed Canadian membership would provide a welcome link between the European and American political systems as well as an insurance against continental isolationism on the part of powerful elements in the United States - surely a proposal which would appeal to any Canadian middle power theorist - the two men allowed that they were most interested to hear that the United Kingdom favoured Canadian membership, as indeed did some of their own colleagues.<sup>38</sup> However, the United Kingdom already was aware that the real opposition to Canadian membership came from the State Department

---

37. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2128, Pearson to Robertson, 6 March 1945. Pearson referred in particular to Wartime Information Board Reference Paper No. 34 which had been written by Professor John Humphrey of McGill University in Montreal. Pearson also counselled greater Canadian representation in Latin America in order to exploit future commercial possibilities. King Papers, J1 Series, Vol. 389, Pearson to Robertson, 13 December 1945.

38. The possibility that opinions of officials of the Department of External Affairs on the issue were to an extent shaped by where individuals had attended university, i.e., Oxford, Cambridge, or an American university, or as in Robertson's case both Oxford and Harvard, arose during the conduct of research for this chapter. Although Keenleyside received his higher education in the United States, and Massey was often uncharitably referred to as a Balliol anglophile, there is only limited evidence to suggest any sort of pattern in the Department in this respect. In a letter to the author of 8 August 1980, H.L. Keenleyside reflected on the question: "The attitude of the officers of External Affairs was divided but not on any hard and fast lines. Most people tended to think it might be a wise thing or it might be unwise but nobody was prepared to man the barricades to promote either policy. So far as I am aware, the attitude of the officials concerned was not influenced by the place in which their previous studies had been undertaken."



in Washington and no further forays into the field could be undertaken until it changed its position. The High Commissioner commented further that both men were anxious to have a Canadian Minister appointed to Mexico but one of the difficulties was getting a properly qualified Canadian to fill the position. "I think Robertson and Wrong are likely to pursue this possibility fairly actively", MacDonald wrote, "Then when they have more Ministers placed in the countries south of the United States they may consider again the possibility of seeking membership of the Pan-American Union."<sup>39</sup> Although Hugh Keenleyside would receive the appointment to Mexico within a year and the question of Canadian membership in the organization would be considered by Cabinet in 1947, MacDonald erred in assuming that Robertson and Wrong would pursue the entire question actively, as their subtle reticence remained and perhaps helped most to determine Canada's position.

There was, however, an exception. The Inter-American Conference on Problems of War and Peace, which met at Mexico City in late February 1945, more popularly known as the Chapultepec Conference, was the first meeting of American foreign ministers to take place since the Rio Conference of 1942. Technically the meeting was to be comprised of the belligerent American republics, and, in response to some adroit United States diplomacy, the six non-belligerents<sup>40</sup>, other than Argentina<sup>41</sup>, proceeded to declare war before the advent of the conference. Its purpose was to consider cooperative measures for the conduct of the

---

39. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, file A9084/281/51, Malcolm MacDonald to Sir John Stephenson, 21 September 1943. Also Sir John Stephenson to Sir Patrick Duff, 15 July 1943.

40. Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

41. The accession to power in Argentina of a pro-Axis government had resulted in a violation of Argentina's pledge to cooperate in the war against the Axis powers; the United States strove to ensure that the new Argentine regime was not recognized by its Latin neighbours or others, for that matter. No action was required of Canada as the Canadian Minister had returned to Canada before the change of Government; the Chargé d'Affaires had been instructed to confine his contacts with the Argentine government to a minimum and to avoid taking any action which would imply recognition of the regime.

King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, minutes of Cabinet War Committee Meeting, 26 July 1944; Department of External Affairs memorandum, 25 July 1944.

war, the economic and social problems which would confront the Americas during and after the war, the status of Argentina, and of significance to Canada, the question of future international organization with regional groupings and the result of the great power discussions at Dumbarton Oaks.

Since Canada was already privy to most of what had transpired at Dumbarton Oaks through its British connection, Canadian attention was held by regional defence and security issues, eventually to emerge in the Act of Chapultepec. This understanding, while not representing a regionalization of the Monroe Doctrine, did amplify earlier Pan-American attempts at Lima (1938) and Havana (1940) to achieve commitments from the organization for effective action to preserve peace and security against extra and intra-hemispheric aggression.

The United States appeared quite intent on keeping Canada abreast of developments. John Hickerson, the leading "Canadianist" of the State Department, actually enclosed copies of the American proposals on security in a letter to Norman Robertson before the conference,<sup>42</sup> and the possibility of Canadian adherence to the treaty became a Christmas cocktail party discussion topic among Ottawa's elite. Robertson wrote Pearson early in the new year, informing him that following consultation with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Canadian section of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, the predictable and prudent course for Canada to follow was to remain interested - but solely on the periphery. A case for joining the negotiations could only be made if the United States was particularly anxious for Canadian participation and if there were both public interest and support in Canada. There was neither. Further, Robertson argued, it would prove exceedingly difficult to engage in broader continental defence discussions prior to Commonwealth deliberations on the subject. Moreover, Canada's evolving multilateral *Weltanschauung* was indicative of grander security interests:

If the United Nations Organization is to be a success, there is an advantage in having the general security arrangements take precedence over regional plans which could be completed a good deal more intelligently when the outlines

---

42. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 413, Hickerson to Robertson, 22 December 1945.



of the general agreements are known...Our attitude towards a hemisphere (*sic*) treaty might be rather different if it followed, rather than preceded the military arrangements contemplated under Article 43 of the Charter.<sup>43</sup>

Nonetheless, it was of more than passing interest for Canada to be informed as to what would be discussed at Chapultepec in the way of precisely such plans for regional security under an all-inclusive multilateral umbrella and it was probably for this reason, more than any other, that Canada acquired unofficial observer status at the conference. From Washington, Nelson Rockefeller, then Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American affairs, wrote Mackenzie King, stating that he would appreciate unofficial contact with a Canadian representative, "...in order that you may know of the plans as they are being formulated, and that we may get the benefit of your thoughts, the mutuality of interests in Canada and the American republics being so strong."<sup>44</sup> Keenleyside, newly-appointed Canadian ambassador to Mexico, was asked by the Prime Minister to monitor developments at the meeting; further detailed information was to be supplied through the United States Embassy in Ottawa. Keenleyside met Rockefeller on several occasions during the course of the conference, and at least once at the Canadian Embassy.<sup>45</sup> Canada was not accorded a privileged position in this respect, as the United Kingdom had been taken into American confidence in a similar fashion, also at the behest of Nelson Rockefeller. As might have been expected, the British and Canadians

---

43. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 413, Robertson to Pearson, 7 January 1946.

44. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 390, Rockefeller to King, 31 January 1945.

45. Keenleyside to the author, 8 August 1980. Mackenzie King may have had a personal reason in acceding to Rockefeller's request. His connection with the Rockefellers, developed when he worked first for them as a labour expert thirty-five years earlier, had endured. Diary entries one and two years later indicate that King had expected an annuity from the family upon his retirement. Nelson Rockefeller's letters to King during this period are full of effusive compliments. See also *King Papers*, J1 Series, vol. 390, King to Rockefeller, 12 February 1945; vol. 413, Rockefeller to King, 12 November 1946.

naturally compared notes and analyses.<sup>46</sup>

The Chapultepec meeting could quite properly be assessed as a triumph for American diplomacy. Although the Act of Chapultepec did not provide specific terms for collective hemispheric security, it was evidently perceived by all participants, as well as Canadian and British observers, as an *entente cordiale* which could further be developed under the aegis of the United Nations Charter.<sup>47</sup> The final communique provided a clause whereby the "Argentine Nation" could eventually accede to the principles and declarations reached at the conference. In addition, in response to a Chilean resolution that Canada be invited to join the Pan-American Union, the American republics recognized Canada's role in the war and expressed the wish that the collaboration of Canada with the Pan-American system should "become even closer."<sup>48</sup> Although Canadian officials were undoubtedly concerned by the Chilean proposal, which they knew about beforehand, neither Keenleyside nor any other Canadian took part in modifying the resolution. For their part, the Latin-Americans tended to appreciate Canada's delicate position and wishes, not to mention State Department preferences. The final tribute to Canada, and the fact that a reference was made at all, was therefore as much an expression of goodwill as anything else, destined to fall upon receptive ears in Ottawa, and was reflective of Mackenzie King's view of Canada's place in the hemisphere.

---

46. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, copy of despatch No. 299, Halifax to Eden, 12 March 1945. The British would later superimpose their perceptions of what happened at Chapultepec to what took place at San Francisco in a remarkable example of baroque diplomatic prose concerning the Latin Americans: "The single tree of Chapultepec, for which they claim some fifty years' growth, seems to loom infinitely larger in their horizon than the entire forest of Dumbarton Oaks, among which they detect some redwoods." King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3675, copy of United Kingdom San Francisco Delegation cable to Foreign Office, 12 May 1945.

47. The Chapultepec and Rio treaties would not be seriously tested, that is in a manner directly involving the United States, until the enduring Falkland Islands/Malvinas dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina broke into sudden hostilities in 1982.

48. Foreign Office, FO 371 Series, file AS1819/317/51, memorandum prepared by Foreign Office Research Department, "The Inter-American Conference at Mexico City", 10 April 1945.



Dramatic global events during the next year, including the beginnings of East/West tensions as well as rampant financial uncertainty, caused the prospect of closer Canadian alignment with the American nations to be raised again. In expectation that Canada would be invited to join the Pan-American Union at the Ninth International Conference of American States at Bogota in January 1948, a memorandum was circulated in Cabinet in September 1947. Security concerns were paramount, and influenced not only by the East/West situation, but by the more volatile state of Latin-American politics in the immediate post-war years. The following extract from the memorandum demonstrates these concerns and adds a further dimension already in Canadian minds:

There is reason to believe that an association of Northern democracies, in these days of air transport, would be a more valuable regional association for Canada than one which includes a number of Latin American dictatorships.<sup>49</sup>

Needless to add, if Canada had flirted with the idea of joining the Pan-American Union earlier in the decade, the prospect now did not seem as politically viable. Cabinet therefore approved instructions to Canadian diplomats in the United States and Latin American countries asking them to prepare demarches which would stipulate *inter alia* that Canada was not seeking membership nor would prefer to receive an invitation to join the association. It was emphasized that great tact should be exercised by Canadian representatives in order to avoid causing offence to any country.

The deliberations and decisions at this time induced another flurry of interesting exchanges between Pearson, Wrong and Robertson, now ensconced in new positions in Ottawa, Washington and London respectively. They expressed their concern at recent Latin American pronouncements on "British Imperialism" in the region, which referred in particular to the British Honduras and Falkland Islands, agreeing that Canada had been saved from being placed in an embarrassing position had it joined the Pan-American Union earlier. Little would they know how prescient their assessment would prove to be. Feelings con-

---

49. Privy Council Office, RG2/18 Series, vol. 75, file D-19-20, memorandum to the Cabinet, "Canadian Participation in the Pan-American System", 6 September 1947.

tinued to be ambivalent, however, and were perhaps best described by Norman Robertson:

In these circumstances, we could help, even in a small way, to bring countries like Argentina and Chile to recognize that this is no time for breaking crockery. I think we should be doing something worthwhile, and would indirectly give those Latin American countries a better understanding of the reason why our interest in the Pan-American Union has remained, and is remaining, lukewarm.<sup>50</sup>

The reader will by now have noticed that Canadian diplomacy of the period was imbued with a sense of moral purpose, which though not entirely inconsistent with the tenets of functionalism, sometimes provided a rationale for either involvement or abstention in foreign endeavours. In the way Canada approached alignment and integration in the hemisphere, this was actually a minor factor. Canadian policy-makers fully realized that their powerful southern neighbour would aggressively dominate the region more than before, theirs was the task to remain abreast of and to anticipate developments, searching for opportunities to exercise enlightened self-interest on behalf of their own country.

\* \* \*

A chapter on Canada's continental and hemispheric alignment would simply not be complete without an analysis of economic issues, and in this case, an examination of continental economic integration. It was, after all, during the war and immediate post-war years that the basis for the present symbiotic economic relationship between Canada and the United States was formed; it would be built upon in the following decade and begin to attract public concern in Canada yet another decade later. As one scholar has written, in the bilateral development of such relations, policy-makers on either side of the 49th parallel employed, with perhaps some variance, a *leitmotif* of consensus and not coercion.<sup>51</sup> In its desire to achieve consensus, however, Canada was obliged to confront the political realities imposed

---

50. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2081, Robertson to Pearson, 23 April 1948; also telegram 447, Wrong to Pearson, 1 April 1948.

51. John Michael Little, "Canada Discovered: Continental Perceptions of the Roosevelt Administration, 1939-1945", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (University of Toronto, 1975), p. 590.



by geography and economics, and accept a form of dependency which would accommodate Canada's self-interest but which the underlying functional principle of Canadian foreign policy could not prevent. A modicum of independence was, however, preserved.

The war was the harbinger of change. Integrated continental defence production, formalized by the Hyde Park Declaration of April 1941, whether in fact or form, probably embodied Canada's preliminary drift into the American economic orbit. To dismiss this economic development in the contemporary fashion as a "sell-out" is not quite correct, as the exigencies of the time will readily demonstrate. A memorandum from the Department of External Affairs written before the conclusion reached at Hyde Park identified the objects of increased economic cooperation with the United States as not only to effect an economic and efficient utilization of combined production, but to minimize the inevitable post-war economic disequilibrium resulting from the changes which both national economies were currently undergoing.<sup>52</sup> An active participant in the continental economic interplay during these years has asserted that there existed no pervasive integration of the entire North American economy for wartime purposes. Instead, "...there was a real and effective coordination of wartime economic planning and wartime controls in the two countries."<sup>53</sup> In resisting full integration, Canada chose to remain outside of the United States Mutual Aid or Lend-Lease Plan of 1941, a measure designed to help ease the United Kingdom's dollar exchange problem; however the Plan's implementation would cause British supply orders to be diverted from Canada to the United States. In order to solve similar exchange difficulties, Canada wished to secure the benefits which would be forthcoming under Lend-Lease, but at the same time wished to avoid the concessions required of the United Kingdom, notably a liquidation of direct investments which could conceivably lead to a weak post-war economic bargaining position. As a major trading nation

---

52. DEA, *Documents on Canadian External Relations*, vol. 8, Part II (1939-1941), memorandum by H.L. Keenleyside and H. Carl Goldenberg (Director-General, Economics and Statistics Branch, Department of Munitions and Supply), 25 February 1941.

53. A.F.W. Plumptre, *Three Decades of Decision, Canada and the World Monetary System, 1944-1975*, (Toronto, 1977), p. 25.

but smaller power, Canada could not afford to agree to such concessions.

The duty of negotiating an agreement with the United States, which would embody present and future Canadian wishes, and which in the simplest terms would denote buying as much from the United States as what it purchased from Canada, ultimately fell to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, who, acting upon sound advice from senior officials such as Clifford Clark, the Deputy Minister of Finance, and Norman Robertson, could justifiably count the resultant Hyde Park Agreement or Declaration among his greatest successes. Included in the text was a vital stipulation concerning Canadian defence purchases of component parts in the United States to be used in equipment and ammunitions which Canada was producing for Britain: "It was also agreed that Great Britain will obtain these parts under the Lend-Lease Act and forward them to Canada for inclusion in the finished articles."<sup>54</sup> The Prime Minister concluded that the continental mobilization of resources in a manner which would enable each country to provide the other with the defence articles it could best produce would bring about greater efficiency and rapidity of production. However, he informed the British, "...Our respective production programmes should prove of the utmost value in augmenting and expediting the aid which this continent is seeking to contribute in the common interest."<sup>55</sup>

Benefits accruing to Canada as a result of the agreement rapidly became tangible. The Canadian balance-of-payments with the United States, comprising a deficit of \$162 million in 1941, registered a surplus of \$136 million one year later. Canada's American dollar balances continued to mount during the course of the war, a fact which prompted an ambitious Canadian diplomatic drive to convince the American public that Canada, not being party to Lend-Lease, indeed was not, as Britain was all too willingly perceived, "bleeding" the United

---

54. DEA, File 1497-40, Draft Text of Hyde Park Agreement, n.d.

55. DEA, File 1497-40, King to Cranborne, 22 April 1941.



States, but was doing its utmost for the war effort.<sup>56</sup> Although in the short term Canada would derive the greatest advantage from this new continental relationship, it would not prove to be of an enduring variety. But of greatest significance, as Mackenzie King stated in the House of Commons, was the fact that the declaration represented yet another demonstration that Canada and the United States were forging a new world order.<sup>57</sup> What he left unsaid at the time but undoubtedly believed, was that this new order would lead to the removal of trade barriers and stimulate freer multilateral trading patterns.

The larger goal of freer global trade tended to suit the Prime Minister's economic approach to the commercial aspects of the North Atlantic Triangle and in a bilateral sense served as an embodiment if not a justification of his idiosyncratic "no commitments" philosophy. King knew all too well that the Americans would never truly comprehend the nature of the Imperial preference system, or for that matter would understand that when the United Kingdom reduced its duties on United States wheat, lumber, and apples, it was really Canada that was making the economic concession in favour of United States export interests.<sup>58</sup> In the other sense, when meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers addressed questions of economic and commercial policy, thereby arousing American suspicions, Mackenzie King

---

56. Pearson Diary, 7 June 1943. Pearson devoted much time to convincing recalcitrant senators and congressmen that Canada was not in fact party to Lend-Lease. His efforts frequently produced mixed results. However Pearson noted that even prominent Canadians had their difficulties in understanding the Lend-Lease question as well: "How can we keep impressing on the United States public that Canada stands almost alone in the world in her virtue in not receiving Lend-Lease from the United States when the Honourable Thomas Vien, Speaker in the Senate (*sic*), in a burst of eloquence welcoming Mr. Roosevelt in Ottawa last week, is quoted by the press as thanking the United States through the President for 'supplying us with ships, arms, munitions and the incalculable advantages of Lend-Lease'." King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 348, Pearson to Robertson, 3 September 1943.

57. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 28 April 1941, p. 2289.

58. DEA, Papers of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 810, memorandum, Robertson to King, 3 November 1941.

would usually indicate his satisfaction with the *status quo* at the meeting itself, and insist that he could not engage in detailed policy discussions without the presence of his Minister of Finance. In preparation for the 1946 Prime Ministers' Meeting in London, Mackenzie King went further and staged a "preemptive strike" by sending a telegram to Prime Minister Attlee stating that a discussion of Imperial preference privileges would not be of value without participating finance ministers.<sup>59</sup> The Prime Minister's philosophy was straightforward: commercial issues should not be wreathed in Imperial trappings of undue emotional importance so as not to alarm the United States, but should be treated in a manner which would allow Canada ample room to manoeuvre in terms of post-war economic planning. In short, the British side of an essentially isosceles North Atlantic triangle should not be extended to the detriment of the American side.

Article VII of the United Kingdom/United States Lend-Lease Agreement, on which Canada had been consulted, called for the elimination of all discriminatory treatment in international commerce and exhorted all like-minded countries to adhere to this noble purpose. Canada wasted little time, exchanging notes with the United States in November 1942 which basically amounted to a declaration of "agreed action" for the liberalization of world trade. If previous trade negotiations were any indication, it was understood in governing circles in both Ottawa and Washington that the first step toward freer multilateral trade should be undertaken on a bilateral basis. In this respect, and in the context of current British-American trade talks, Norman Robertson took maximum advantage of a meeting with Secretary of State Cordell Hull in August 1943 to reassure the Americans of Canada's priorities: "While Canada was interested in the successful outcome of the United Kingdom-United States trade talks, we, of course, had always dealt with the United States directly on such questions of joint concern." Robertson went much further. He stated that the mobilization of the Canadian and American economies for war had placed the considerations which usually govern commercial

---

59. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 324, memorandum by J.A. Gibson, "Commonwealth Trade and the Future of the Empire Preference", 25 April 1946; also vol. 322, file F3407, copy of Foreign Office paper PMM(44)8, "Annex-Economic Policy", 1944.



policy into abeyance, giving both countries "...[A] greater opportunity than we had ever before to see that trade should flow through the most productive and most economical channels."<sup>60</sup>

By February 1944, the Americans had already advanced some more specific ideas for an orderly agenda on future economic discussions to the British, and, since the Russians had been dilatory in indicating whether they wished to talk at all, Canadian views could now be sounded out. In assessing the import of what the larger powers wished to accomplish, Robertson presented his perspectives to the Prime Minister in more persuasive language than was his wont, with an optimism which would underly the customs union discussions between Canada and the United States four years hence. "I feel, very strongly," Robertson wrote, "that what we do, or leave undone, in these next few months may determine the entire course of international economic relations." In developing his argument, he chose to amalgamate new Canadian functionalism with traditional self-interest:

In this particular field Canada is in a key position because of the volume of our trading interest and of our special relationship with the United States and United Kingdom...Tariffs and preferences, which have been for practical purposes inoperative for three or four years, will become important again, and new vested interests will develop which the world needs, and Canada as much as any other country. I think there may be a chance... of securing a comprehensive and thoroughgoing trade agreement with the United States, which could be the first major installment of the multilateral programme which nearly everybody recognizes as the desirable goal...<sup>61</sup>

As it happened, the Under-Secretary's optimism remained unfounded in the short term. The meeting in Washington in February 1944, while correct and evoking the requisite platitudes by both sides on the merits of Article VII of the Lend-Lease Agreement, did not come close to resembling the "meeting of minds" the Canadians had hoped for. Moreover, the Canadians were somewhat shocked by the American response to their proposal for a fifty per cent reduction on all duties. Congressional pressures against substantive horizontal tariff cuts, in

---

60. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 335, memorandum, Robertson to King, 24 August 1943.

61. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 334, memorandum, Robertson to King, 21 December 1943.

addition to the views of American public opinion, dictated that concessions on the part of the British Commonwealth should be offered in return. Canadian counterarguments in defence of Imperial preferences and explanations that the suggested fifty per cent would apply to most-favoured-nation tariffs only notwithstanding, the United States negotiators clung to their views. "The alternatives to Canada to timely action on a broad international basis are not attractive," Robertson concluded, "An attempt to reach a large-scale bilateral trade agreement with the United States is certain to face a major attack on our preferential tariffs." Such an attack, he believed, would come upon Canada individually rather than as part of a general American scheme and could place economic and even political strain on the Commonwealth.<sup>62</sup> If Canadian industry, which had expanded so greatly during the war, was to take advantage of new-found markets, particularly those in continental Europe, the "beggar thy neighbour" trading policies of the previous decade could again evolve out of the narrow bilateralism being proposed by public interests in the United States.

As a trading nation with much to lose and equally as much to gain, Canada participated in the preparatory talks in London in 1946 for an international trading organization which would operate loosely under the umbrella of the United Nations. The results of the preliminary meeting, and subsequent discussions at Geneva and Havana, were to determine whether the ideal of freer multilateral trade so nobly expressed in Article VII could be realized. Norman Robertson, the leading and most influential economic thinker of the Department of External Affairs, had by then assumed the position of High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, and, while not directly involved in policy formulation in Ottawa, nevertheless offered wise counsel which was always

---

62. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 322, memorandum, Robertson to King, n.d. (February 1944). To add to Robertson's grief, the *Montreal Gazette* placed the shy mandarin into the unwanted limelight with a story entitled "Post-War Tariff Cuts or Abolition said Discussed by Canada and U.S.". Robertson was quoted as having informed the newspaper that his mission was secret and could not be discussed. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 334, memorandum, Robertson to King, 2 February 1944.



gratefully received. To assert that these trade negotiations ultimately foundered on the rocks of a new protectionism tends to be overly simplistic, for out of the hopes of what the International Trade Organization (ITO) might have been, arose the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). For Canada, the approach throughout respected a functionalist ideal of sorts: in emerging as one of the world's leading trading nations, Canada, by virtue of having been treated as practically an equal partner by both the United States and United Kingdom in economic discussions during the war, had achieved international status and recognition. Canada's subsequent actions would have to be commensurate to its new-found status. It followed, therefore, that for Canada to do anything but agitate for freer trade, such as for example, take a unilateral decision to impose discriminatory trade restrictions at times of economic difficulty, would link the Canadian economy with those of the weaker countries, in whose company Canada did not wish to belong. Moreover, freer trade with some short-term "belt-tightening" would ultimately result in greater prosperity.<sup>63</sup> Such opinions, reflective of classical free trade theory, were widely held in the Government of Canada, from the depths of the bureaucracy to the Prime Minister himself.

With the end of the war, more qualified views gradually came to the fore. Although the reaffirmation in 1946 of the Hyde Park Agreement assured continental economic cooperation during the early post-war period, at least until whatever new world economic order had fallen into place, the prospects for Canadian export diversification into large European markets appeared gloomy. Eastern Europe's incipient economic realignment foretold of political developments to come, Western Europe was capable of purchasing only little, and the United Kingdom, while victorious, had mammoth outstanding debts and precious little sterling to pay for Canadian imports. As a result, Canadian exports in 1946 decreased by twenty per cent from their wartime yearly average.<sup>64</sup>

---

63. DEA, File 265(s), Wilgress to Pearson, 30 September 1947. Dana Wilgress led the Canadian delegation to the United Nations Trade and Employment Conference at Geneva at the time.

64. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 306, file 3188, address by Minister of Trade and Commerce, J.A. McKinnon to Canadian Exporters' Association, 8 November 1946.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Canadian policy-makers demonstrated a more intense interest in pursuing bilateral economic avenues with their southern neighbour with intent to achieve more immediate benefits for the Canadian economy as well as possible economic restoration through a mode of dyadic association with future global economic ventures undertaken by the United States. The situation was exacerbated through the famous "dollar crisis" of 1947, caused primarily by the fact that a very large proportion of Canadian exports were being financed on credit, whereas the bulk of imports from the United States, chiefly in the form of durable consumer goods, were being paid for in cash. "Our exchange difficulties do not result from any basic weakness in Canada's domestic economic position", Douglas Abbott, the Minister of Finance, informed Hugh Dalton, his British counterpart, "Production is at a high level, prices and costs have risen less than in most countries and our balance of payments on current account (*sic*) shows a surplus." In the same particularly frank message, the Minister of Finance requested that the United Kingdom reduce the speed by which it drew upon a 1.25 billion dollar line of credit negotiated with Canada in 1946, an action which in itself posed a danger to rapidly dwindling Canadian dollar reserves. The circumstances were so acute, Abbott stated, that Canada had considered, and had ultimately rejected, adopting legislative measures to impose import restrictions, in view that the success of the Geneva trade negotiations could be jeopardized by precipitate Canadian action.<sup>65</sup>

That the situation was grave could not be denied, as it became the major topic of discussion when Mackenzie King met Harry Truman in April 1947. The Prime Minister enlightened the President, with whom incidentally he did not share as easy a rapport as with his predecessor, that current Canadian losses of American dollars were running over \$50 million per month, and expressed his concern that in the absence of a rapid trend towards a point closer to a form of equilibrium, the Canadian Government would have no choice other than to impose import restrictions, depreciate the value of the Canadian dollar,

---

65. Privy Council Office, RG2/18 Series, vol. 68, file D-13-4, cable No. 997, Abbott to Dalton, 16 June 1943.



or both.<sup>66</sup> Once the Prime Minister had introduced this ominous-sounding topic, it was left to a group of very able Canadian officials, most notably Graham Towers, Governor of the Bank of Canada, and Louis Rasminsky of the Foreign Exchange Control Board, to continue talking to the Americans about the subject throughout the summer. Ambassador Wrong continued to play an essential pivotal role.

In the course of these talks, United States officials, while undoubtedly sympathetic to the Canadian predicament, made it abundantly clear that their major preoccupation was not with what was economically necessary to assist Canada but rather with what was politically possible. The American public had to become convinced that the process of financing European reconstruction would eventually come to an end and indeed that Europe was doing all it could to help itself. Canada could not expect a more lenient view. In an informal meeting with Wrong, Towers and Rasminsky in May, however, Under-Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Assistant Secretary of State Will Clayton and John Hickerson, the State Department's Canada expert, reiterated the above, but acknowledged that the entire foreign economic policy of the United States was jeopardized by what had become a global dollar problem. The meeting produced an understanding that a small group of officials from both countries should continue - "in utmost secrecy", given political sensitivities - to explore ways and means of rectifying the dollar crisis. Meanwhile, the depletion of Canadian reserves had increased to a startling rate of \$100 million per month.<sup>67</sup>

Before this working group could be organized, Secretary of State George Marshall delivered a speech on 5 June at Harvard University which announced the comprehensive and ambitious plan for European reconstruction which would quickly come to bear his name. The worsening climate of East/West relations, stimulated by political developments in Eastern Europe in addition to fears of Soviet espionage in Western countries, to which, as a following chapter will illustrate, Canada was not immune, had introduced a more significant strategic

---

66. The Prime Minister's arguments were formulated in part by Hume Wrong in Washington. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 240, file 2412, memorandum, Wrong to King, 21 April 1947.

67. DEA, File 265(s), WA1689, Wrong to Pearson, 31 May 1947.

element to American foreign policy, international economic policy not being excluded. For Canada the Marshall Plan could paradoxically both complicate and help resolve the dollar crisis; association with the Plan could open sought-after European markets, yet in turn could generate a new array of heretofore unexpected financial problems.

In immediate response from London, Norman Robertson analyzed the situation with a view toward the longer term. He conveyed his attitude to Pearson that the movement for European economic integration and enhanced cooperation with the United States, as described in Marshall's speech, could possibly exclude Canadian exports from European markets. Canada was at a threshold: it could either be manoeuvred into the failing and weak sterling area or move towards greater continental integration with the United States. A viable reciprocity agreement with the United States, he stated, "[W]ould strengthen... our dollar position in the short term, and in the long run, ensure us against too great a dependence, relative to the United States, on the European market." It was Robertson's conclusion that the political and economic consequences of a discriminatory policy against the United States, to which the Prime Minister had alluded during his call on President Truman, would be disastrous and should only be employed as a last resort.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the most capable efforts by all concerned in Ottawa, alternative solutions to import restrictions were difficult to assess and next to impossible to apply. Clifford Clark, the Deputy Minister of Finance, led a powerful delegation to Washington to engage in discussions with United States officials on Canada's financial problems. Clark was blunt, direct and forthright in presenting his American interlocutors with two alternative proposals for Canadian financial recovery. In a one hour statement, Clark made use of the words "banned", "discriminatory", "prohibited", "cut-off" and "drastically reduced" in rapid succession, even repeating them to the point where the Americans were simply left shocked by what their Canadian colleagues were proposing. One need not have wondered why. "Plan A", the severe option, requested an American loan of \$350 million; called for rationing of pleasure travel (proposed savings would amount to \$30 to \$40 million

---

68. DEA, File 264(s), Robertson to Pearson, 19 June 1947.



annually and would discomfit those Canadians accustomed to winter vacations south of the border); and proposed a ban on every identifiable consumer item imported from the United States with the exception of citrus fruits, some vegetables and textiles which would be subject to quota allocation. In sum, such restrictions would save \$400 million. "Plan B" was of course the preferred and more moderate proposal. It included a \$500 million loan, similar rationing of pleasure travel, but proposed non-discriminatory import restrictions through quota allocation for all countries and some outright bans.<sup>69</sup> As a further and more long-term measure, which one could assert reflected a Robertsonian influence, steps would be undertaken to divert Canadian exports through reduction of United States tariffs and participation of Canada in the Marshall Plan. Canada hoped that the United States would place some of the procurement for the Plan in Canada or make American dollars available in the United Kingdom or Western Europe for the purchase of commodities in Canada.<sup>70</sup>

Perhaps the most unpalatable aspect of both plans, as far as the Americans were concerned, was the matter of the loan. Indeed the United States officials at the meeting, in addition to suggesting that any Canadian action be delayed until January so as not to coincide with the announcement of agreements negotiated under the GATT at Geneva, recommended that Canada approach private bankers in New York or the International Monetary Fund. However, persistent lobbying by Hume Wrong and others in Washington, which to a large degree centered around the spectre of the implementation of the dreaded Plan A, eventually paid off as in mid-November the Export-Import Bank authorized a \$300 million line of credit for five years, representing a smaller amount and a shorter period for repayment than had been desired. The moderate proposal therefore became operative, and was put before the Canadian public by Finance Minister Abbott on 17 November, somewhat ironically immediately following Mackenzie King's broadcast from

---

69. DEA, File 265(s), "Summary of United States-Canada Financial Discussions, October 29-31", prepared by J.R. Murray, Second Secretary at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, 1 November 1947.

70. *Ibid.*, and in addition, various memoranda, "The Dollar Problem", "Exchange Problem-Support Restrictions", n.d.

London<sup>71</sup> which extolled the success of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, signed at Geneva on 30 October. Abbott emphasized that the measures undertaken would not cause Canada to deviate from its long-term goal of freer trade, and promised that "We intend to get rid of these restrictions as soon as circumstances will permit."<sup>72</sup> Greater continental economic integration was evidently still a goal worth pursuing.

The subsequent State Department press release, at an unusual length of five pages, was benign in tone if not outright sympathetic to the Canadian position. It reflected upon the greater weight Canada placed upon foreign trade in its own economy and upon the traditional triangular pattern of trade which was now under considerable strain. The reluctance of the Canadian Government to impose import restrictions was also underscored, and what must have been considered a triumph for the "spirit of goodneighbourliness" which so frequently punctuated the speeches of statesmen in both countries, the press release concluded that "In terms of her continued contribution to world reconstruction, Canada's action should be considered as a short-term measure which does not mean abandonment of the long-term objectives shared by the United States."<sup>73</sup> Despite American understanding, a sympathetic press in both countries, and the politicians' most convincing rhetoric, the imposition of import controls constituted a political embarrassment to a nation which had committed itself to a renewal of the international order in all aspects, and indeed, had come to be seen by others as a proponent of multilateralism. Canada's

---

71. The Prime Minister was in London to attend the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Philip Mountbatten. The timing of the speeches had elicited concern in official circles in Ottawa; however in the event news of the Royal Wedding swept economic news off the front pages of most papers.

72. Quoted in DEA, File 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "A Survey of Canadian External Policy - Chapter 7 - Problems of Economic and Financial Foreign Policy", 1951. For a more detailed account of the entire issue, see R.D. Cuff and J.L. Granatstein *American Dollars, Canadian Prosperity* (Toronto, 1978), pp. 41-63.

73. Quoted in DEA, File 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "A Survey of Canadian External Policy - Chapter 7 - Problems of Economic and Financial Foreign Policy", 1951, p. 7.



action, as unwillingly taken as it was, in this sense amounted to a loss of self-respect.

In his radio speech to the Canadian public, Douglas Abbott had originally intended, but in the event did not say that the Government had proposed discussions with the United States "...looking toward a more far-reaching and effective reduction of trade barriers than is possible under the existing United States legislation respecting trade agreements."<sup>74</sup> The sentence had been deleted because the State Department, wary of an increasingly protectionist-oriented Congress, wished to prepare the ground carefully for a matter which, although having throughout the years been a subject of informal discussion in both capitals, still required considerable political support. What Abbott really alluded to in this unused portion of his speech was the question of the viability of a free trade area or customs union between Canada and the United States. In the pursuit of this goal, the following months would illustrate how idealistic and practically venturesome continental urges in Canadian economic policy vis-a-vis the United States could become. However, the end result can best be classified as an historical "might-have-been".

The idea of a free trade area, reciprocity, or a customs union with the United States was current in 1940s, as Robertson's memoranda as Under-Secretary and subsequent despatches from London attest. It had support amongst other key players in Ottawa, most notably the Keynesians in the Department of Finance, and was not without attraction south of the border, where elimination of the Imperial preferences system had been a long-held commercial goal. Canada's response to the dollar crisis in the form of the imposition of import restrictions and the acquisition of a substantial American loan, was not viewed as a panacea in Ottawa, merely as a stop-gap measure. What was ultimately required was a means by which the enormous one-way bilateral trade flow could be regularized. In economic terms, comprehensive tariff cuts on a continental basis on manufactured goods in particular could encourage an industrial rationalization and greater productivity in Canada's emerging "branch plant"

---

74. Quoted in DEA, File 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "A Survey of Canadian External Policy - Chapter 7 - Problems of Economic and Financial Foreign Policy", 1951, p. 7.

structure. The politico-economic argument for the above had been employed by Robertson some years earlier. Canada must choose to align its economy more closely with that of the United States, or simply be forced into greater self-sufficiency, a process which would unavoidably involve discriminatory policies and an orientation towards Europe which could ultimately result in friction with the United States.

John Deutsch, Director of the International Economic Relations Division of the Department of Finance, and Hector McKinnon, Chairman of the Canadian Tariff Board, began informal discussions on the concept of a comprehensive bilateral trade agreement with the United States officials at the time of the Clark mission to Washington in October 1947. During the ensuing months, items to be included in such an agreement were identified, and methods of implementation explored. The plan which eventually emerged was unorthodox, and has been referred to by one scholar as "bold and striking".<sup>75</sup> Despite this description, it was also disarmingly simple: the proposed customs union would allow for substantially free trade between the two countries, but would at the same time permit each to retain its separate tariff on products from third countries, thus leaving latitude for further multilateral undertakings. Further, quotas for subsidized agricultural products would be imposed. As tariff autonomy would in fact be retained, it was assumed by all concerned in the negotiations that there would be fewer grounds to bring that hoary shibboleth, the eventual political absorption of Canada by the United States, into the public mind.<sup>76</sup> If Canada now decided to pursue a closer American orientation in economic policy in favour of the traditional North Atlantic pattern, then partnership, and not defensive reactions to the image of absorption, would have to become the operative rule. However it was recognized, if only inaudibly, that with this new partnership, which would promote enhanced spe-

---

75. See Terence Fay, "The Proposed Canadian-United States Customs Union, 1947-1948: A Bold and Striking Plan", *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* IV, No. 1 (April 1980), pp. 38-53.

76. For a full discussion of the negotiating process, see Cuff and Granatstein, *American Dollars, Canadian Prosperity*, pp. 69-77; and John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*, vol. 2, (Toronto, 1982), pp. 90-95.



cialization of Canadian industry, and open the vast United States market to Canadian products, there would exist the very real possibility that broad policy decisions would be taken in Washington, not Ottawa.

Obviously, Canadian officials believed that the advantages accruing to Canada would far outweigh any real or perceived disadvantages. The negotiating process, in a departure from established practice, did not feature a strong input from the Department of External Affairs, this perhaps being the case because Norman Robertson, who had led the Canadian side in bilateral trade negotiations on several previous occasions, was now in London, burdened with other responsibilities. Nonetheless, the senior officials of the Department were among the most ardent supporters of the plan and were not without influence in Cabinet.

It was precisely in Cabinet where opinions mattered most. C.D. Howe, now Minister of Trade and Commerce, and Douglas Abbott, the Minister of Finance, were both strongly in favour, as the opportunity for a free trade area represented a timely means by which to shake off the shackles of current import restrictions, as well as provide an immediate substitute for uncertain European markets. Of greater significance was the fact that Mackenzie King had given his apparently unqualified *imprimatur*, noting that the Americans seemed to be serious indeed about continental "good-neighbourliness."<sup>77</sup> Continental economic integration, it seemed, was to become a substantive embodiment of this virtue.

By March 1948, the Prime Minister had begun to entertain second thoughts. Timing of the introduction of the package into a broader Cabinet circle, and similar delays south of the border in terms of bringing the matter to the President and then to Congress, caused him to pause and collect his thoughts. His decision, Mackenzie King realized, would be vital not only for the nation but for the fortunes of the Liberal Party. He remembered all too well the debacle of the general election of 1911, when the issue of Canadian commercial reciprocity with the United States had defeated his predecessor Sir Wilfrid Laurier and brought personal defeat upon himself,

---

77. See J.W. Pickersgill and D.F. Forster (ed.), *The Mackenzie King Record*, vol. 4 (Toronto, 1970), p. 261.

then a youthful Minister of Labour. The tariff reductions proposed at that time were insignificant when compared to the magnitude of the present plan. Further, Mackenzie King did not wish to have his penultimate accomplishment as the British Empire's longest serving prime minister be remembered as one which incited divisiveness, as a recent rereading of Sir Richard Jebb's *Studies in Colonial Nationalism* had convinced him could prove to be the case.<sup>78</sup>

Sentimentality and his concern for a place in history aside, King was also worried by recent examples of United States strength and power. American attitudes of omnipotence within the International Monetary Fund, often not subtly expressed, had alienated other friendly members, including Canada, leading them to believe their own concerns were being swept aside.<sup>79</sup> Opinions in Congress had become increasingly dogmatic on questions of economic policy; the introduction of any new issue caused American politicians to instinctively form protectionist lines.<sup>80</sup> Exhibitions of extraterritorial designs were also not excluded, as in the case of a 1947 United States Justice Department decision to investigate Canadian pulp and paper companies under American anti-trust laws.<sup>81</sup> Perhaps good fences did make good neighbours.

An editorial which appeared in *Life* magazine on 15 March, claiming that Canada needed "complete and permanent economic union with the United States", appears to have been the catalyst which pushed the Prime Minister over the edge. Always wary of the broad

---

78. King Diary, 24 March 1948.

79. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 411, Rasminsky to Robertson, 3 April 1946.

80. DEA, Papers to the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 810, H.D. Scully (Canadian Consul General in New York) to Robertson, 25 June 1946.

81. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2157, File "Commodities, Pulp and Newsprint, 1946 and 1947", memorandum, "Canadian Course of Action", 23 February 1948. In this instance, the American press strongly criticized the Justice Department's action, the situation being eventually diffused by the appointment of a committee of representatives of the Newsprint Association of Canada which met with State Department officials in Ottawa to discuss allegations of price-fixing. As Canada's greatest ally during this contretemps was the American press, diplomatic activities were characterized by patience and rationality, if at times exasperation.



brush of popular journalism, King feared that such inaccuracies as contained in the article could, through repetition, become etched in the public mind as truth. Canadian newspapers delivered a split verdict in response, ranging from *The Ottawa Citizen's* assessment of a free trade area as "an inadequate reason for national suicide", to the *Vancouver Sun's* opinion that "the proposal is worth careful study."<sup>82</sup>

His mind made up, the Prime Minister nevertheless permitted full discussion of a memorandum on the subject at a meeting which included St. Laurent, Howe and Abbott as well as several senior mandarins. To the best of their abilities, McKinnon and Pearson emphasized the benefits to Canada which would stem from the free trade proposal, stating that the circumstances which now made American concessions possible were not likely to exist again, either to the same degree or in similar combination. While agreeing with the logic of the arguments brought forward, King placed great stress on the fact that trade with the United States was of such political importance that a customs union could only be realized after careful planning and extensive public debate, if not after a general election on the issue. Howe and Abbott here indicated they would relish such an opportunity to destroy the Conservatives. But Mackenzie King had experience on his side. He was afraid "old British flag waving tactics" would be resurrected by the Conservatives, resulting in a bitter political battle at a time when he was about to withdraw from public life and the party would be in the process of selecting a new leader and platform. Further, and although he did not dwell at length on this aspect, the Prime Minister believed that a major trade policy shift of this nature could perhaps in a way be related to the secret Atlantic security talks currently underway in Washington.<sup>83</sup>

---

82. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 240, file 2411, "Summary of Opinions by Canadian English-Language Newspapers on the Subject of a Customs Union with the United States:", n.d. The French language press did not react to the *Life* editorial. Ironically, reciprocity was also not an issue in Quebec during the 1911 election campaign.

83. Robertson Papers, vol. II, Pearson to Robertson, 22 April 1948.

Lester Pearson, for one, accepted that whether the decision taken was right or wrong, it was arrived at after a thorough analysis of the situation. What was imperative now was to convey the decision to the Americans in such a way as to leave the door ajar, and to emphasize that the decision taken was not as a result of Ministers believing the proposal to be unsatisfactory or disadvantageous to either partner. Pearson's own views, however, remained unchanged. "I cannot help but feel that a great opportunity has been missed," he wrote Robertson in London, "It is...a sad reflection on our sense of comparative values that so much time has been spent on so many things during the last two or three months of infinitely less importance than these proposals." In conclusion, Pearson commented, "I think that we have 'missed the bus', even if we have saved the timetable."<sup>84</sup>

\* \* \*

The inevitable conclusion which may be drawn is that Canada was tacitly testing the permanence of the North Atlantic triangle during these years. Although not endemic to a firmly articulated foreign policy, the contemplation of regional and multilateral counterweights exemplified in this chapter by evolving relations with Latin America and the Pan-American Union, respectively indicated a desire for Canada to pursue avenues of self-interest which deviated from traditional patterns. The extent of such deviation, however, would be contingent upon Canada's relations with the United States, now an aggressive superpower. By war's end, Canada had inexorably been drawn into a continental economic and strategic orbit, and enjoyed guaranteed security and economic prosperity in return for consensual cooperation with its southern neighbour. The pattern, once clearly established during the early war years, continued, yet during the 1940s did not seriously compromise the functional principle of Canadian foreign policy, nor eliminate the North Atlantic triangle, as the remaining chapters will demonstrate. Canada's close relationship with the United States very likely helped to create and maintain the global position it had so assiduously craved and had every right to - that of a middle power.

---

84. Robertson Papers, vol. II, Pearson to Robertson, 22 April 1948. Wrong, who shared the delicate task of informing the Americans of the decision, did so with tact and candour, although he too was bitterly disappointed. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 335, file 3611, Wrong to Pearson, 28 April 1948.



## CHAPTER VIII

### PEACE AND EUROPEAN RECONSTRUCTION

We have had enough of the mailed fist. What our world needs today is the hand of the physician.

- William Lyon Mackenzie King<sup>1</sup>

Canada was unprepared for the sobering experience of peace-making. Indeed, Canadian forays into the incipient multilateralism of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, where Canada had been denied central membership, as well as the ultimate structure of the United Nations itself following the San Francisco conference, should have served to foreshadow what would transpire at Paris in the late summer of 1946. After having fought valiantly and obtained the right to sit independently at the privileged table at Versailles in 1919, Canada, with its higher global profile, played

---

1. DEA, file 4697-K-40, "Statement delivered by Prime Minister Mackenzie King before the plenary session of the Paris Peace Conference", 2 August 1946.

a less prominent role in 1946 than in the resolution of the earlier conflict. As John Holmes has written, "It may be that the part played in 1919 has been exaggerated because it was the establishment of Canadian status hitherto unacknowledged, whereas what happened in 1945-46 seemed like a checkmate to a country on the rise."<sup>2</sup> It is vital to recognize, however, that in 1945 it was not so much a question of Canada's or any other nation's role as one of diverse global circumstances; there was no omnibus peace conference, and in fact one to reach a settlement with Germany was never held. Division among the great powers was profound, the world poised at the brink of the East/West chasm of today. Thus, agreement with despatch, with a minimum amount of divisiveness between the great powers was a necessity in 1946, and the lessers simply had to be content with what was imposed on them from above.

In response to the constraints of the peacemaking process, Canada's functional principle suffered somewhat, eventually becoming more refined and taking other more subtle forms. Canada's participation in the successful North Atlantic effort to reconstruct war-ravaged Europe through the Marshall Plan reflected an astute approach to the post-war era, founded in a convergence of functionalism with a great amount of self-interest, together with the realization that the North Atlantic Triangle would endure, but not as before.

\* \* \*

By virtue of its own part in the war effort, international conferences, as well as its coveted North Atlantic role as interlocutor between the United Kingdom and the United States, Canada expected to play a part of some significance in the ultimate making of peace. In order to achieve this goal, it was necessary to remain abreast of great power deliberations on the post-war settlement, and this need, as evinced in an earlier chapter, was the rationale behind Canada's own establishment of committees in Ottawa concerned with post-hostilities planning.

By mid-1943, at about the time when the functional principle was first articulated by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons,

---

2. John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace, Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1979), p. 105.



Canadian policy-makers began to feel some discomfort at the rather scanty information supplied to them by Washington and London respecting the proposed armistice period, and the inter-allied machinery which was expected to control Europe and the peace conferences.

"The problems arising out of the relationship of the smaller countries to the 'Big Four'," Hume Wrong wrote in response to preliminary British probes as to Canada's eventual role in the armistice, "...become of special importance in connection with the peace settlement as soon as the need for concentration of military power lessens."<sup>3</sup> Despite Canadian eagerness to be functionally involved when the time came, Canada remained cautious and prudent, eschewing advance commitments of any variety, since "the nature and extent of the Canadian contribution to the 'policing of Europe' would depend on the circumstances of the time and the definition of that phrase."<sup>4</sup> The shadow cast by the Prime Minister's "no commitments" philosophy was long, and, as usual, public opinion had to be most carefully heeded. Moreover, Canadian troops had been in Europe for some time, were anxious to return home and would possibly have to be deployed in the Pacific war theatre.

As elucidated in a memorandum to the Cabinet War Committee by the Advisory Committee on Post-Hostilities Problems in February 1944, which *inter alia* described the "zoning plan" for the occupation of Germany received from the Dominions Office, the end of hostilities would likely bring continued shipping difficulties as a result of transport problems created by the war against Japan and the need for supplies in Europe. Even if transportation were readily available, the general forward movement of troops in Germany, including those Canadian, would proceed until full and general occupation was achieved. In addition, the rate of Canadian forces withdrawal would have to be coordinated with the withdrawal of British and American troops. No country could afford to lose ground as a result of public reaction

---

3. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, Cabinet War Committee Memoranda, memorandum by Hume Wrong, "Procedure for Negotiation of Peace", 26 August 1943.

4. *Ibid.*, Cabinet War Committee Document No. 578, "Organization of Europe on Cessation of Hostilities", n.d. (August 1943).

to preferential treatment being extended to the troops of another allied nation.<sup>5</sup> Although the memorandum concluded with the caveat that it would be difficult to make detailed plans for the disposition of Canadian armed forces after the end of hostilities without at least some thought being given to general plans for international security - the conference at Dumbarton Oaks had not yet taken place - it was plainly obvious that some continuing Canadian military commitment in Europe was required, if for no other reason than to safeguard Canada's multilateral interests and enhance its status. In the event, the Canadian Army Occupation Force comprised 18,000 troops and the Royal Canadian Air Force provided thirteen squadrons.<sup>6</sup>

Canadian anxieties at the prospect of being left out of the peace deliberations were not without basis: in Washington President Roosevelt informed Leighton McCarthy that he "and Winston and possibly Stalin" would settle everything. Similarly, in the State Department it was thought that the exiled European governments should not return in the "baggage train" of the victorious Allies, but after a military occupation and temporary political vacuum. Both ideas disturbed the Canadians and with cause, as a Casablanca-style meeting would not give smaller powers such as Canada an adequate voice, and a political gap in Europe on the other hand would be a "dangerous nonsense" which would play into the hands of European communist parties.<sup>7</sup> The struggle for Canadian representation on the Central Committee of the newly-formed United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, ultimately unsuccessful, and the peripheral role to be played at Dumbarton Oaks, would serve as poignant examples as to just how little central influence Canada could aspire to in questions of great power concern. Being preferentially informed by the British was

---

5. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 426, Cabinet War Committee Document No. 715, "The Disposition of Canadian Military Forces after the Conclusion of Hostilities with Germany", 11 February 1944.

6. For a more thorough discussion, see James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada, Peacemaking and Deterrence* (vol. III), (Toronto, 1972), pp. 183-190.

7. Pearson Diary, 21 April and 21 May 1943.



all very gratifying, but the sort of consultative role Canada wished could not function on an *ex post facto* basis. Perhaps most embarrassing was the fact that the Soviet Union, having expressed its desire to have the Dominions share equal status in the United Nations with the constituent Soviet republics, also objected to the admission of the Dominions to the peace conference. Foreign Minister Molotov went so far as to argue that the United Kingdom should sign for all, and if India were admitted to the proceedings, then the Baltic republics should also be allowed to participate.<sup>8</sup> Had Canada's role at Versailles in 1919 merely been an aberration?

Hence, when the draft armistice terms were pondered by the great powers in the spring of 1944, the Canadians were uneasy about the preamble of the draft instrument of surrender which stated that the supreme commands of the Soviet Union, United States and United Kingdom would receive the unconditional surrender of Germany "acting by the authority of their respective Governments and in the interests of the United Nations." The Post-Hostilities planners in Ottawa preferred to substitute the phrase "on behalf of", since the armistice of the Great War had employed these words, and so informed the Dominions Office. British efforts to win approval for a change of phraseology were rebuffed by the Americans and Russians, leaving officials in the Department of External Affairs to cynically observe that the armistice would not only be imposed on Germany, but on the smaller allies as well. Mackenzie King concurred, commenting that Canada had declared war independently through its own Parliament in 1939 and it would therefore be intolerable to accept any formula which ignored that essential fact.<sup>9</sup> Continued Canadian representations of this genre however failed to accomplish very much.

Although it was tacitly acknowledged that Canadian views on the future of Germany would not be brought to the forefront of great

---

8. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, Wrong to Pearson, 27 December 1945. According to Pearson, "the Russians are clever enough to see that India's position is a card which they can continually play in order to extract concessions for themselves." Pearson to Robertson, 28 December 1945.

9. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Minutes of the Cabinet War Committee, meetings of 14 June and 5 July 1944.

power ruminations on the subject, this did not prevent officials of the Department of External Affairs from devoting more than a little time to this complex question. John Holmes has explained that policy-makers were in part motivated by "sheer intellectual exuberance" as well as by "the inability to keep one's hands off a subject of admitted importance."<sup>10</sup> Not surprisingly, Escott Reid's hands were the most active. In a provocative memorandum written in the autumn of 1943, he suggested severe economic and social measures to be implemented by the victors to arrest "re-nazification." The result would be "...such an omelette of at least some of the Nazi elements in German life that these Hitlerite eggs can never get back into their shells again." Reid proposed the expropriation of German estates and heavy industry without compensation to their owners, the enforced separation of church and state, the humiliation of Nazi leaders through their own signatures on the armistice, enforced hard labour for all senior government and military personnel, and lastly, forcing a charter of rights of the individual upon Germany as part of the terms of peace. Reid went much further in idealistically suggesting that all countries could benefit from such a settlement:

Our efforts to eradicate fascism from Germany will be stultified if they are not based on a recognition of the fact that the Germans did not succumb to a peculiarly German disease but to a disease which is endemic to modern society... If we approach the problem of the post-war treatment of Germany in this spirit of humility, we may be led to take steps not only to eradicate the roots of fascism from Germany but also to eradicate them from our own countries.<sup>11</sup>

A contrary opinion to Reid's arguments quickly came from John Read, who, having been the Department's Legal Advisor since 1927, probably reflected the views of the "old guard." Read wrote not without sarcasm that he was shocked to find his colleagues, "the most distinguished living scholars within the field of history and political science, engaged in the jettison (*sic*) of essential principles and joining light-heartedly in the headlong stampede towards a bigger and better world war." Ever the practical lawyer,

---

10. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace*, vol. 1, p. 119.

11. Reid Papers, vol. 6, memorandum by Escott Reid, "Policy towards Germany", 14 September 1943.



he concluded that there was no historical evidence as to the practical possibility of a conquering group constructing a nation and this was certainly not a principle embodied in the Allies' major public statement of intent, the Atlantic Charter. It would be exceedingly difficult for the Allies "...to go further than to create a set of circumstances in which it might be reasonably practicable for a nation to grow and develop which was capable of living with the rest of the world."<sup>12</sup>

During the ensuing months, Canadian foreign policy analysts clung to the basic assumption that a defeated Germany would remain chauvinistic to a degree which though at the time could not be properly assessed, would bode future danger. In Canadian eyes, an effective international organization would be the best instrument to guard against potential German aggression, and could also assume rigid control over Germany's foreign affairs. In response to an enlightened and cooperative spirit on the part of future German governments, such control could be relaxed, but not abandoned.<sup>13</sup>

Such a proposal could of course only be implemented through the concurrence and participation of the great powers, and, in effect, exhibited an ideal viewed through parochial prisms. What course of action could Canada, which, unlike some other nations had no territorial claims against Germany, recommend? From London, Charles Ritchie commented that two generations of Canadians had been involved in war as a result of Germany's aggressions, and that as a result Canada might well be requested to participate in multilateral plans extending over several years to keep that country disarmed. "If the Canadian people are to assume these responsibilities", Ritchie wrote, "...[they] must feel that Canadian policy towards Germany has been decided in terms of Canada's interests and that full opportunity has been given for Canada's views to be heard..."<sup>14</sup> His concern with

---

12. Reid Papers, vol. 6, memorandum by John Read, "A Lost Cause", 17 September 1943.

13. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2106, file AR 405/1/8 Pt. 1, memorandum, "The Future of Germany", 23 February 1944. The memorandum was likely the work of Escott Reid.

14. *Ibid.*, memorandum by C.S.A. Ritchie, 23 March 1944.

the matter of public support was echoed in Ottawa, where Hume Wrong believed that while for a short period after the cessation of hostilities Canada could assume obligations without simultaneously sharing in their determination, public sensitivity would render that state of affairs transitory indeed.<sup>15</sup>

And public opinion was important. In a poll conducted by the Wartime Information Board in December 1944, 60 per cent of Canadians questioned were certain that the treatment of Germany after the last war was related to the present one, and of these a full 70 per cent supported the notion that Germany was then dealt with too leniently. Those who subscribed to an opposing view, that Germany had received overly harsh treatment, were very much in the minority, but were invariably better educated. The overwhelming majority thought Canada should have something to say in the eventual peace settlement.<sup>16</sup> Thus, Canadian politicians and policy-makers were left with the unmistakable impression of the public's conviction that Canada had done its part in the war, and now had every right to its just share in the making of peace.

In endeavouring to occupy a more central role in the European control machinery being contemplated by the great powers, Canada was sympathetically assisted by the United Kingdom, which, in its own detailed plans, proposed Commonwealth participation in an advisory council to the envisioned Control Commission. When this suggestion was predictably turned down by the Americans and Russians, the British put forward the idea that Canada could perhaps administer a specific function of the Control Commission, however this unplanned approach was again summarily rejected. The Canadians for their part were doubtful whether in fact membership on an advisory council would bring with it a bonafide chance to participate in the direction of the control machinery. Receiving the right to appoint a mission to the control commission, a subject of considerable discussion in Ottawa, would not in itself give the governments so represented either responsibility for or a voice in general policy

---

15. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2106, file AR 405/1/8 Pt. V, Wrong, "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary", 30 October 1944.

16. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 427, Cabinet War Committee Document No. 989, Wartime Information Board Survey No. 51, 2 December 1944.



towards Germany. Conversely, however, such an establishment would likely provide a useful means of access to the supreme Allied authority in Germany and in so doing could protect Canada's interests.<sup>17</sup> Usually left unsaid as well as unwritten was the fact that Canada preferred an intermediary role unto itself, to which it had in some measure become used to, rather than co-existence on an essentially impotent council with other smaller powers.

In any event, by November 1944 the Cabinet War Committee had decided that Canada should seek membership in a United Nations Commission for Europe - if such a body were to be established - and that a Canadian military mission should be set up in Berlin soon after the defeat of Germany. Major-General Maurice Pope, the former Chairman of the Canadian Joint Staff Mission in Washington and Senior Canadian Army Member of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, duly assumed the position of Head of the Canadian Military Mission to the Allied Control Commission in Berlin in January 1946. Pope was charged with a daunting array of tasks, the sort which would best befit an ambassador, as his mandate included observation of Germany's immediate post-war economic and social development, as well as the process of "de-Nazification". Unlike an ambassador, however, Pope did not have to award prominence to the representational aspects of his job. Canada, as other nations, wished to limit its contacts with Germany to the bare requirements dictated by protocol.

If the above responsibilities were already not enough, Pope's letter of instruction, written by Norman Robertson, specified that there also existed a considerable Canadian interest in the commercial field: "The restrictions placed on German industrial production as the result of Allied policy will doubtless create opportunities for Canadian exports in the replacement of German trade abroad. This is a development that should be watched..."<sup>18</sup> Robertson's remarks, which Mackenzie King underscored on his personal copy, were indicative

---

17. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2106, file AR 405/1/8, Pt.V, C.P.H.P. (44) Report 6, "Control Machinery for Europe - Canadian Participation", 19 October 1944.

18. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 241, file F2427, Robertson to Pope, 29 January 1946.

of the aggressive approach to economic policy Canada would take in the immediate post-war years.

Pope's abilities to observe and analyze were acute, and his despatches, always well-reasoned and extremely literate, served to give politicians and officials alike an overview of developments in Europe. His assignment was not without its frustrations, and as Pope remarked, "Caution and reserve are undoubtedly excellent virtues in themselves, but to an inquirer it sometimes seems that they can be overdone."<sup>19</sup> Only British representatives provided him with occasional if meagre information and an insight into the inner workings of the control machinery. Nonetheless, Pope's presence in Berlin provided Canada with a valuable strategic window from which to observe increasing East/West polarization:

For never even one moment here in Berlin can an observer exclude from his mind the sensation of grim opposition of conflicting forces, glacier-like one might almost say, in view of the pressures to which they give rise. The point of contact may be in Berlin, but all the while one feels that the range of opposition, of which one cannot avoid being so acutely aware, runs along the entire periphery of Eurasia, from Finland southwards to the Middle East and thence eastwards to far-off Manchuria and Korea.<sup>20</sup>

Mackenzie King led a small but impressive delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in the summer of 1946. It comprised Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Health and Welfare; Arnold Heeney, Secretary to the Cabinet; Georges Vanier, Ambassador to France; Dana Wilgress, Ambassador to the Soviet Union; Norman Robertson and General Pope. The delegation was too small to deal with the clausal minutiae of peacemaking which had so absorbed Sir Robert Borden and his colleagues in 1919, its members instead preferred to address the broader questions of the day. The Prime Minister himself favoured this approach, it being conducive to his shrewd political instincts in assessing the mood of the Canadian public, as well as his own personal aversion to entanglements in European affairs. That

---

19. Pope Papers, vol. 2, Pope to Wrong, 24 May 1946.

20. Pope Papers, vol. 2, despatch #38, Pope to King, 23 March 1946.



is not however to imply that King was reluctant to believe in fair functional treatment for all. "It is my understanding, and I have so informed Parliament," Mackenzie King wrote Clement Attlee prior to the meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers in May, "...that all states invited to the Conference will have full opportunity to examine the draft treaties on their merits and to put forward suggestions for amendments." Although Canada would never go so far as to express outright dissent, he hinted darkly that "If these countries' views were to be ignored, it might make it difficult for the governments concerned to secure the support of their parliaments and peoples for the final peace treaties."<sup>21</sup>

Hume Wrong, who was in London at that time, believed that despite assurances from both the British and Americans that the smaller powers would have a voice, the Big Four - now of course including France - would probably not depart at all from the conclusions reached by the Council of Foreign Ministers, established by the Moscow Declaration three years earlier. "The real Peace Conference may, therefore, be the Council of Foreign Ministers," Wrong concluded, "...and the countries invited later to Paris may only have a choice between signing and not signing the peace treaties. The present, therefore, may be the only time to exert influence on the results."<sup>22</sup> Though Wrong's plea was duly noted in Ottawa, the Prime Minister had already determined the low-key approach which would be followed.

At the plenary meeting of the conference in Paris on 2 August, King informed the assembled delegates that Canada possessed no specific national interest "in the adoption of any particular formula for the solution of individual conflicts and differences which, in the aggregate, will constitute the general settlement." Rather, "Our principal interest and duty lies, it seems to me, in helping the countries more directly concerned to work out agreed solutions which are likely to

---

21. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 324, file F3413, King to Attlee, 23 April 1946. King also reminded Attlee that he was sure to agree that it would not be possible for the British Foreign Secretary to advance a Commonwealth policy at the meetings of the Council of Four, since Commonwealth members were to be represented separately at Paris.

22. *Ibid.*, cable no. 998, Wrong to Robertson, 24 April 1946.

endure."<sup>23</sup> The spirit of the functional principle which the Prime Minister himself had enunciated was still evident, if muted: Canada would endeavour to assume a role proportionate to its contribution with a view towards the betterment of the whole.

The Canadians, it may be said, found solace in their functional principle when it became evident that the smaller powers would not have much to say in the broad thrust of the peace settlement. The difficulty in securing a Canadian voice in the control machinery for Europe, the disheartening news via the usual Dominions Office channels concerning the decisions taken by the Council of Foreign Ministers, continued Soviet objections to Dominion involvement, as well as the lack of any ready information to prepare for parliamentary debate,<sup>24</sup> all foretold of what was to transpire at Paris. Brooke Claxton was not very surprised, therefore, when United States Secretary of State J.F. Byrnes informed him that the meeting at Paris was "...but a conference at which the representatives of the Lesser Powers are being afforded an opportunity to make recommendations regarding the draft Peace Treaties to the Council of Foreign Ministers which said body is free to accept or reject as it pleases them."<sup>25</sup>

For his part, Mackenzie King could only endure a month at Paris. Tired and ill, horrified at the profligacy of delegates from other countries,<sup>26</sup> and despondent at seeing too many new faces and few familiar ones, he returned to Ottawa, but not before having gazed

---

23. DEA, file 4697-K-40, "Statement Delivered by Prime Minister Mackenzie King before the plenary session of the Paris Peace Conference", 2 August 1946.

24. In preparation for a debate in the House of Commons on the subject in March 1945, Hume Wrong prepared a memorandum for the Prime Minister based upon the fragmentary information collected thus far: The particulars of the recent Franco-Soviet Treaty and the 1942 Anglo-Soviet Treaty. Most of the information Wrong provided Mackenzie King was of the "a senior Foreign Office official has told Holmes of Canada House" variety.

King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 342, file F3683, memorandum, Wrong to King, 19 March 1945.

25. Pearson Papers, Pre-1958 Series, vol. II, Pope to Pearson, 29 October 1946.

26. King Diary, 5 August 1946.



with evident fascination at the bunker in Berlin where Hitler had met his end,<sup>27</sup> and having informed his advisers just how much they had failed him. Before he left, the Prime Minister made a most useful contribution to solving the procedural difficulties plaguing the conference by suggesting that the Council of Foreign Ministers, instead of waiting until the conference had ended to consider its recommendations, could convene in Paris during the course of the meeting to ponder all proposals. This suggestion was ultimately adopted and served to abet the fractious nature of the conference. It was Mackenzie King's last gesture on the international stage and thus represented the end of an era.

The Prime Minister's departure left an energetic and competent Brooke Claxton in charge of the Canadian delegation. Human resources were stretched: for every Canadian delegate, for example, there were seven from Yugoslavia and other smaller countries were also better represented. The requisite committee work therefore brought with it problems of manpower allocation, shift-work becoming commonplace. The fact that Canada had made it abundantly clear that it was not interested in the finer aspects of territorial questions or in legal matters, was paradoxically all the more reason to place Canadians in such positions where the utmost of objectivity was required. As a result, General Pope found himself chairing a committee concerned with the Bratislava bridgehead between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and Claxton himself served as chairman of the higher profile Legal and Drafting Commission. Canada could therefore not help but become involved in European questions, its role in conference committees providing the most ready example of how functionalism could be applied, not through rational direction by decision-makers as a policy instrument, but by *force majeure*, when the greater powers and circumstances dictated a functional role.

However as might be expected, once in positions of influence, the Canadians were zealous. Canada supported Austria's right to be

---

27. Pope Diary, vol. 2, 21 August 1946. Pope recorded that King had remarked that "most of this gang of Nazis had come from the gutter, had achieved the highest positions in the Government of a great state and there like vermin in a hole in the ground Hitler had died like a rat."

heard on the frontier dispute with Italy;<sup>28</sup> encouraged other nations, notably the Balkan states, to be more reasonable in their treatment of boundary questions; and throughout sought to secure protection for racial and religious minorities who certainly had suffered most during the war. Practically all commissions had sessions stretching on for six hours or more, the Italian Political Commission establishing the record with a twenty-eight hour marathon meeting without adjournment. Most Canadian delegates managed only two or three hours sleep per night and used the rest of their time - when not serving on commissions or committees - poring over agenda items, as well as drafts and representations from other countries and interest groups.<sup>29</sup> Informal Commonwealth meetings also took place, but as expected, interests diverged markedly.

General Pope privately grumbled at the attitudes of his younger colleagues, who, it appeared to him, were grasping at straws which could be utilized to build up Canada's image and could thereby cause the conference to degenerate into a "plug competition". He agreed with Mackenzie King that the Canadian press should not necessarily always be given something to report and expressed satisfaction at an article in the *Manchester Guardian* which admiringly noted

---

28. Claxton informed the plenary conference that Austria could have had its say in probably less time than had been used to debate whether it should be heard or not. His remarks closely followed the line taken by the Prime Minister: "If anybody asks what is Canada's interest in this, I reply that Canada has probably as little interest in territorial questions as any country. We want no territory, we want no reparations, but we have an interest in peace, in security and prosperity... We believe that freedom is the essence of security and prosperity and that a peace based on freedom is more likely to be brought about if everyone is given the freest possible opportunity to express their views than if we close the doors."

DEA, file 4697-K-40, Statement by Brooke Claxton before the 20th Plenary Conference, 17 August 1946.

29. Claxton Papers, vol. 67, "Notes on 'Canada and the Conference of Paris'", n.d. This memorandum constituted Claxton's comments on a draft chapter in F.H. Soward, *Canada in World Affairs, From Normandy to Paris, 1944-46*, (Toronto, 1950). Also vol. 89, Claxton to Pickersgill, 13 September 1946.



Canada's reserve as being an unmistakable sign of maturity in international councils.<sup>30</sup>

If Canadian delegates and officials were eager, they certainly did not embarrass themselves publicly in the manner their Commonwealth colleagues from Australia did. Herbert Evatt, the Australian Minister of External Affairs, continued in the boisterous fashion which had won him such notoriety at San Francisco a year earlier, and introduced no less than seventy amendments on diverse subjects, all of which were defeated.<sup>31</sup> By comparison, the Canadian approach tended to be almost too low-key.

But what in effect had been the point of these months of feverish activity? In his final speech before the Plenary Conference on 8 October, Brooke Claxton stated that the measure of the success or failure of the Paris Conference would be the extent to which the Council of Foreign Ministers acted upon the recommendations of the conference. How were the great powers to act if they themselves were so hopelessly divided over so many issues? The great powers convened in New York following the Paris meeting to give final consideration to its recommendations, and although the territorial settlement between Italy and Yugoslavia continued to be a point of contention particularly over the internationalization of Trieste, in general the proposals which had attracted two-thirds majority support at Paris and where there was consensus among the great powers were in most cases incorporated into the final text. As limited in function as the Paris Conference was, Claxton wrote St. Laurent, its recommendations "...contributed substantially to the settlements that have now been arrived at."<sup>32</sup>

---

30. Pope Diary, vol. 2, 13 & 14 August 1946.

31. As other ministers, Evatt did not remain for the entire conference, leaving the majority of amendments for the remaining delegation members to introduce. Even New Zealand, so closely linked to Australia in foreign policy terms, was unable to support the majority of the Australian proposals. As Claxton commented, "It requires Dr. Evatt himself to argue an Evatt amendment." Claxton Papers, vol. 91, Claxton to St. Laurent, 7 September 1946.

32. Claxton Papers, vol. 88, Claxton to St. Laurent, 10 February 1947.

It had to be and ultimately was recognized, however, that no matter how meritorious the accepted recommendations were, their fundamental weakness was that they had been carried in the face of sustained opposition by what had increasingly been referred to as the "Slav Bloc".<sup>33</sup> The conference therefore assumed added significance in that it marked the first occasion when the essential differences between East and West were held up to public scrutiny. At the beginning of the conference, many delegates believed bloc voting of any variety would not persist and prove to be the rule, but by October, a great many of the final votes "...were counted out as 15 to 6, 15 to 6, with the mechanical regularity of a cash register."<sup>34</sup> The Western countries were eager to conclude the conference so that the second meeting of the United Nations General Assembly would not have to be postponed, but the Soviet Union did not share their haste. Failure by the Western nations to respond in kind to long-winded Soviet discourses frequently constituted a propagandistic victory for the other side, as it seemed the West had no defence. Playing the Russian game on the other hand merely served to prolong the conference.

In the wake of the Paris Conference, decision-makers in Ottawa believed that there existed a need to discuss the German settlement, which had not been considered at Paris, before the four greater powers pronounced it a *fait accompli*. Consequently, Canada circulated its views to the others at a senior level, and, in return, received polite acknowledgements and occasional exclamations of interest in proposals such as the creation of an international authority to control the Ruhr. This work culminated in late 1946, when the Council of Foreign Ministers appointed deputies to ponder the submissions of

---

33. DEA, Washington Embassy Series, vol. 2453, no. 72, Claxton to St. Laurent, 31 October 1946.

34. Claxton Papers, vol. 67, "Notes on 'Canada and the Conference of Paris'", n.d. Claxton also noted that the Soviet delegation was better briefed than any other. In the Legal and Drafting Commission, for example, it was a Russian delegate, speaking in English, who pointed out a mistake between the English and French texts, after they had been screened by numerous legal experts.



the other formerly allied nations. With typical caution, the Canadian Government sought assurances that such a submission would not be construed as representing Canada's final word in the making of peace with Germany. Further, the Canadians still clung to the notion that provision should be made for appropriate Canadian participation in the deliberative process. "We are not necessarily asking for immediate participation," Lester Pearson wrote Norman Robertson who was to make the demarche in London, "In fact, something in the nature of commissions of states with special interests meeting...in private and with as much informality as possible, would meet our views..."<sup>35</sup> The time for extended consultations, however informal, had long since passed.

For Canada, therefore, the importance of questions of substance concerning peace and the future of Germany as elucidated in its memorandum before the deputies, was in a sense secondary to those questions dealing with procedure, public awareness very likely attributing greater significance to the latter. Indeed, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Louis St. Laurent, in response to parliamentary and editorial pressure, had indicated to the House of Commons that Canada had endeavoured to be "moderate and constructive", and was still prepared to suggest practicable alternatives.<sup>36</sup>

In the event, however, agreement amongst the deputies verged on the impossible and a further meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Moscow in March 1947 resulted in deadlock. Small power concerns were by this time clearly not uppermost in the minds of the Foreign Ministers, although United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin continued to voice the sort of sympathies almost required by tradition. Subsequent Canadian memoranda on the German peace settlement, including an ingenious suggestion from Robertson calling for an international statute incorporating a constitutional framework for Germany as an alternative to a formal peace treaty,<sup>37</sup> fell upon interested, but essentially deaf, great power ears.

---

35. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 428, Pearson to Robertson, 24 January 1947.

36. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 30 January 1947, pp. 5 ff.

37. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 428, Robertson to Pearson, 29 January 1947.

In a sense, Canadian multilateral policy had become rather stale, neutered by the failure to realize a justification of Canada's war-time role. A self-righteous emphasis on procedure, that is, how smaller powers could be justly recognized in the peacemaking process in a manner commensurate to their contributions, the functional principle, had ceased to have as much significance during the interregnum between the creation of the United Nations and the North Atlantic Pact as before. Canada's inability to secure a more influential role at Paris and indeed in the entire peacemaking process, resulted in an unconscious decision among Canadian policy makers to give less prominence to the functional principle as an instrument of unilateral foreign policy and instead apply it in a more muted fashion to traditional North Atlantic patterns, where greater success could be anticipated. The economic reconstruction of Europe represented a challenge in this respect.

\* \* \*

"The problem of international relief," Norman Robertson wrote in the autumn of 1946, "is a problem of sharing scarcities. It would be easier to tackle this problem if every country was simultaneously doing its utmost to reduce these scarcities by encouraging maximum output of all the things the world needs."<sup>38</sup> This aphorism was not new to Canadian policy; its economic rationale was characterized by a sort of multilateral fundamentalism, evident in Canada's approach to the incipient General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), as well as its abortive attempt to establish a continental customs union with the United States the following year. Moreover, the support Canada gave to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) during the war in large measure coloured Canada's approach to the economic reconstruction of Europe at war's end.

To be sure, UNRRA had encountered its share of difficulties, however its work was illustrative of the results which a well-coordinated international relief effort could produce. Pearson's early prediction that Canadian chairmanship of the organization's Supply Committee could become a "big thing",<sup>39</sup> had proven to be the case, and,

---

38. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2105, File AR 405/1/4/20, Pt.1, memorandum, n.d. (November 1947).

39. Pearson Diary, 22-27 March 1943.



in addition, this practical and well-publicized demonstration of the functional principle was in itself an argument for a strong Canadian voice in emerging international organizations, whether economic or political. Not to be ignored was the fact that future commercial opportunities in Europe were practically assured.

It was with some trepidation, therefore, that officials in the East Block in Ottawa viewed the American decision to terminate UNRRA in 1946, ostensibly for the reason that the United States could not agree to the further allocation or distribution of relief supplies by an international agency over which it could not exercise adequate control. In other words, relief had become increasingly politicized, and continued wranglings in the Council of Foreign Ministers convinced all concerned that the situation would not improve. The Americans simply did not wish to provide supplies to areas of Eastern Europe which could indirectly support rearmament efforts coordinated by the Soviet Union.

Canada, while appreciative of American thinking, could not associate itself with any public declaration of its southern neighbour's rationale, and chose instead to adopt a moral tone to the effect that the best policy to follow would be one of strict adherence to the principle that relief was outside politics and should only be granted to nations which could visibly demonstrate a required need.<sup>40</sup> As impartiality was evidently required for such an interpretation, what better agency to coordinate relief in war-torn Europe than the new, if untried, United Nations? Consequently, the Canadian delegation to the first General Assembly in London was instructed to give assurances that Canada would be prepared to bear its fair share towards meeting 1947 relief needs if this was to be done by "cooperative international action to discharge what would, in fact, be recognized as a responsibility of the United Nations."<sup>41</sup> The British and Americans

---

40. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2105, File AR 405/1/4/20 Pt.1, memorandum by Pearson, 24 October 1946.

41. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 110, File U-40-1, "Memorandum to the Canadian Delegation to the General Assembly concerning International Relief Questions after the Termination of UNRRA", 4 November 1946.

however opposed the creation of such an international agency, preferring bilateral arrangements between supplying and receiving governments instead. While maintaining its position as to the desirability of a relief agency at the General Assembly, Canada realized that it could not support its establishment against the wishes of its closest great power friends, thereby assisting the aims of anti-Western Soviet propaganda, already rife at this first regular meeting of the United Nations. Nonetheless, Canada prudently took every available opportunity to stress the international character of the relief problem, and supported the establishment of a proposed technical advisory committee which would investigate relief requirements, the ability of countries to meet these needs and which would make recommendations for outside assistance for those who required it.<sup>42</sup>

Bilateral undertakings proved largely to be of a piecemeal variety, insufficient to meet the difficulties posed by the drain on Western European dollar reserves as well as general reconstruction costs, particularly exorbitant in the United Kingdom. Canada, itself suffering from its own dollar crisis in 1947, looked toward the United States for leadership, and that country in turn sought more visible cooperation from the British and other Europeans to assist the Truman administration's own efforts to convince Congress of the efficacy of reconstruction in Europe. The Americans believed that European economic integration, or a regional customs union, might bring solutions, yet even Dean Acheson, the Under-Secretary of State, admitted there was no clear idea in Washington as to what was meant by the concept, nor why and how the British should take the initiative.

For its part, the United Kingdom was cautious; its reluctance to lead rather than follow was born of doubts based upon inconsistencies in American policies as well as the belief that should Britain take an initiative, all traditional American suspicions of "British imperialism" would again be aroused. In Ottawa, a seeming lack of American commitment was a cause for concern. "The great danger," Lester Pearson informed the Prime Minister, "...is that while Congress waits and wonders, Europe will go to pieces." In such a scenario,

---

42. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 343, file 3694, memorandum from Pearson to King, 6 December 1946.



the Under-Secretary continued, Canada would be among the first countries to suffer. Whereas Canada's immediate economic difficulties stemmed from its American dollar imbalance, emergency arrangements could always be entered into with the United States, however the European danger in the long term embodied a greater threat to Canada's economic security. "If there ever was a necessity for bold, imaginative leadership in Washington," Pearson concluded, "it is now."<sup>43</sup>

The United States Secretary of State, George Marshall, delivered his famous Harvard speech three days later on 5 June 1947, and although the speech in itself was little more than an implication that the United States Administration was favourably contemplating a plan for economic assistance to Europe, the message to the Europeans was unequivocal: if those countries organized to help themselves, the United States would be willing to assist them substantially in turn. As a result, the United Kingdom and France met at Paris a few weeks later with the intention of organizing a conference of all European countries, a meeting which eventually took place in July, and then without the participation of the Soviet Union and its new-found satellites. Committees were established to study various elements of reconstruction, their reports eventually being presented to Secretary Marshall in September.

Neither the British nor the Canadians had been forewarned about Marshall's speech; initial reactions were therefore rather guarded in nature, there being fears that the speech's vagueness could be interpreted and utilized by the Soviet Union to advance its own designs in Europe, should agreement in the Council of Foreign Ministers on the future of Germany prove illusory. Preliminary discussions at Whitehall led the Canadians to think that Foreign Office officials were convinced that any money forthcoming under the Marshall Plan would arrive too late, and would be of insufficient quantity to stimulate economic recovery. That being said, however, the British were expending every effort to organize with what little information was initially available to them.<sup>44</sup>

---

43. DEA, File 264(S), Pearson, "Memorandum for the Prime Minister", 2 June 1947.

44. Douglas LePan Papers, vol. 1, despatch A.663, Hudd (Frederic Hudd, Acting High Commissioner) to St. Laurent, 30 July 1947; also, King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 429, cable no. 960, LePan to Pearson, 11 June 1947.

In talks with the Americans in the autumn concerning the fate of Canada's own rapidly dwindling dollar reserves, Canadian negotiators exacted a commitment based largely on the goodwill of the Truman Administration that off-shore purchases in Canada would be allowed under the terms of the Marshall Plan. This promise was one of the key factors in bringing about smooth bilateral acceptance of the less draconian of two proposed Canadian import restriction programmes examined in the preceding chapter. Purchase of commodities in Canada with United States dollars could not only in part alleviate the dollar deficit, but could also reduce the anticipated inflationary pressure in the United States which would be caused by the Marshall Plan, thereby helping to effectively undermine the thrust of Congressional opposition to the entire venture.

Off-shore purchases, while of undisputed benefit to Canada, could however not be classified as a Canadian contribution to European recovery, as policy-planners within the Department of External Affairs readily pointed out. Since passage by Congress of the Marshall Plan was by no means assured, a Canadian contribution, even if only of a token variety, would allow the State Department to inform the American public that there were other countries willing to share the burden. With the ever-increasing tension in Europe in mind, Douglas LePan in London proffered a broad analysis of the dilemma:

Canadian cooperation in the Marshall Plan would tend to show that the Western World is not to be pictured as a single giant towering above a cluster of mendicant clients, each holding out a begging-bowl, but rather as a group of freely associated states, differing widely to be sure in their resources and in their needs, but also held together by a great number of ligaments both of interest and of sentiment.<sup>45</sup>

In Ottawa, Escott Reid calculated figures to give substance to a proposed Canadian financial contribution. He thought it would be advantageous to suggest to the Americans that Canada would be prepared to provide \$250 million a year for four years towards European recovery if the United States would agree to spend the equivalent amount on purchases in Canada under the auspices of the Marshall Plan. Although he

---

45. DEA, File 264(S), LePan, "Memorandum: Canada and the Marshall Plan", 25 September 1947.



conceded that such a contribution would further strain the Canadian dollar position vis-a-vis the United States, at least in the short term, positive action of this sort would serve to demonstrate to Canadians that taking measures which would further distort the Canadian economy - as, for example, import restrictions - would be unwise and impede the goal of freer global trade.<sup>46</sup> As was often the case, Reid's political superiors did not share his enthusiasm.

In their report to the American Secretary of State, the Europeans identified Canada as a supplier nation and also implied that it should have a larger role in the execution of the Marshall Plan. What remained unclear however, was whether Canada would be expected to extend further credits to the participating countries - the loan to the United Kingdom already counted substantially for the drain on Canadian dollar reserves - without financial assistance from the United States.<sup>47</sup> It was for this reason as much as any other, in addition to the clearly articulated goal of securing greater opportunities for Canadian trade, that Clifford Clark's discussions with the Americans in the autumn - as already examined - concerning proposed Canadian economic measures, assumed such importance.

Uncertainty as to how and how much Canada was to contribute to the Marshall Plan continued until the end of the year. This was not as a result of a dearth of activity in Ottawa nor of excessive parsimony, but reflected the fact that international finance was in a fluid but dismal state. It was a time for making do with what one had until the Marshall panacea, held up by politics in Congress, rectified matters.

Meanwhile, the drain on Canadian reserves, represented largely by unrequited exports to the United Kingdom and Western Europe, amounted to \$969 million during 1946 and \$601 million in 1947. The British financial position, described by Norman Robertson as "a time bomb ticking away in the heart of Whitehall"<sup>48</sup> was far worse and continued to deteriorate at an alarming rate.

---

46. DEA, file 264(S), Reid, "Canada and the Marshall Plan", 8 October 1947.

47. St. Laurent Papers, vol. 37, memorandum, "Canada and the Marshall Plan", 20 October 1947.

48. DEA, file 9388-40, Robertson to St. Laurent, 8 January 1947.

The United Kingdom had been a recipient of Canadian food assistance throughout the war, and as its financial situation became increasingly precarious following it, British citizens were confronted with a stricter rationing programme than heretofore. Bilateral discussions pertaining to continued Canadian food exports to the United Kingdom were inaugurated by a British statement which proposed a reduction of \$45 million of certain products in 1948, including a complete cessation of purchases of Canadian beef, eggs and bacon, as well as some timber imports. When coupled with an expressed British desire to draw down its Canadian line of credit at a faster rate, despite repeated Canadian entreaties to resist this temptation, the stage was set for what were to become exceedingly difficult negotiations. Contrary to the hard line adopted by the Canadian Minister of Agriculture, the redoubtable "Jimmy" Gardiner, who predictably tendered full support to his rural constituency, Robertson from London and Wrong from Washington advocated a temporizing policy until Marshall Plan aid was available, but also emphasized the need for more diversified outlets for Canadian agricultural products.<sup>49</sup>

Since a potentially embarrassing deadlock seemed inevitable at bilateral food talks held in Ottawa in December 1947, Lester Pearson, who had lately been concerned with more glamorous international issues at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, took an active part in personal negotiations with Sir Percivale Liesching, the leader of the British delegation. In order to strengthen its hand, the Canadian Government, at the instigation of the Departments of Agriculture and Finance, had startled and alarmed the United Kingdom by suggesting the abrogation and refinancing of the bilateral wheat agreement, proposing instead to supply new export credits to make up the difference between the world wheat price of \$3 per bushel and the British contract price of \$1.55. This low price in itself represented a form of aid, but American recalcitrance made its recognition as such in the Marshall Plan doubtful. With the worsening dollar situation in Canada, it was felt in Ottawa that little else could be done in the circumstances.

---

49. DEA, file 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "A Survey of Canadian External Policy, Chapter 7 - Problems of Economic and Financial Foreign Policy", p. 14.



Amid grumblings from senior officials from other departments, but with the full support of Mackenzie King, who more than anyone was aware of potential public reaction to perceived Canadian avarice, Pearson deftly intervened with a compromise proposal. He suggested that the wheat price be maintained at \$2 per bushel for the next crop year and that other food contracts should be renewed at adjusted prices. To recompense, \$15 million per month would be made available for the United Kingdom to draw upon for three months only, whereupon the financial situation would be reviewed. Robertson viewed this measure as the best of possible stopgap solutions: "[B]y the time... three months are up and the whole problem has to be examined again, the prospect of large-scale aid under the Marshall Plan will have become so unmistakably clear that the problem will be easier."<sup>50</sup> Although on the surface Robertson and Pearson, as others, viewed the European Recovery Programme (ERP), as the Marshall Plan was officially known, as a great hope for European reconstruction and financial recovery, they realized it was not the sole solution to the global economic malaise nor to Canada's own financial problems, for that matter. Moreover, Canada could not afford to simply monitor developments in Washington with a sense of polite aloofness; its North Atlantic heritage demanded more.

Accordingly, Hume Wrong was cabled instructions in early 1948 as how to approach United States officials on Canada's financial position and role in the European Recovery Programme. In a meeting with Under-Secretary of State J.A. Lovett and his advisors, Ambassador Wrong and John Deutsch explained that although it was as yet too early to assess the results of the import restrictions imposed the previous autumn, preliminary statistical surveys had shown that the Canadian measures would at best prevent a further drain on Canada's dollar reserves. Wrong's assertion that after a thorough review of the financial situation, Canada could go as high as \$100 million in allowing European countries to draw upon credits already authorized - \$45 million for the United Kingdom had already been agreed upon during the

---

50. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2100, file AR 106/4, Robertson to Pearson, 27 December 1947; Pearson to Robertson, 22 December 1947; also King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 334, file 3610, Pearson, "Memorandum for the Secretary of State for External Affairs; United Kingdom Food Discussions," 12 December 1947.

earlier food negotiations - brought a remark from Paul Nitze<sup>51</sup> of the American side that this amount was well below their own estimates of the share which they expected Canada could carry, even after consideration of the indirect contribution implicit in low-priced food contracts to the United Kingdom.<sup>52</sup>

In Wrong's words, the meeting was not encouraging: "Lovett remarked that he could give me 'little current comfort', and he later said that our talk had at least had the effect of sharing our misery with them. The results, in short, were depressing."<sup>53</sup> Wrong was uncertain whether he had convinced his American interlocutors of the risks Canada would face in granting further credit to the United Kingdom. To the Americans, the British appeared to have far greater risks to run than Canada, which in turn might have to act with a certain lack of financial prudence by extending \$15 million monthly for a longer period, as it was unclear when the European Recovery Programme would come into effect. The ambassador countered with the arguments which had been so well prepared for him in Ottawa, returning repeatedly to the dangerous nature of Canada's reserve position but concluded that "We shall, however, probably hear more of this suggestion."<sup>54</sup>

Indeed Canada would, for its economic self-interest had placed it in an unenviable bargaining position. As a result of its willingness to play the "lynch-pin" role and help to bring British financial concerns to Washington's attention, it received subtle yet firm pressure from the United States to do more. Moreover, in order to receive the benefits of off-shore purchases under the European Recovery Programme, American public opinion could not be allowed to receive the impression that Canada was a selfish nation.

Canada's attempts to underscore British woes in Washington were appreciated in Whitehall. More than the usual amount of consul-

---

51. Presently leader of the United States delegation at the nuclear disarmament discussions at Geneva.

52. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 61, file C-10-13-D, cable no. 488, St. Laurent to Wrong, 21 February 1948.

53. *Ibid.*, cable no. WA612, Wrong to St. Laurent, 27 February 1948.

54. *Ibid.*



tation had taken place between the Canadians and the British; cables and despatches were shared and freely discussed among officials in Washington, London and Ottawa. The close relationship between their respective problems was readily acknowledged; that the key to their solution lay in Washington was self-evident. However the Canadians stopped short of agreeing to undertake a joint approach to the Americans, as had been suggested in some circles in London. This, it was believed, could prove to be dangerous given "the traditional American suspicion of Commonwealth 'ganging up' tactics."<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, it was also essential not to blur overly the distinction between Canadian and British interests, nor to be seen as a peripheral partner in what was rapidly becoming a North Atlantic tangle.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, soon to be Prime Minister, subscribed to a considerably harder view of Canada's role than did his senior advisors. To St. Laurent, the United Kingdom possessed reserves which it would in any case have to expend, and Canada was doing that country a great service with its low contract prices. "Safeguarding their reserves," St. Laurent informed Pearson, "... is a matter for them to discuss with Washington and I do not like the idea of having us join with them as supplicants..."<sup>56</sup> Pearson, who was of course acutely aware of the public damage which could be done by being too closely associated with the British, was also wary of the dangers of an aloof attitude: "Nothing could be more misleading or irritating than to have the British over-emphasize in Washington the difficulties of the Canadian sector of their financial front."<sup>57</sup> Canada had to be involved and although the Canadians were clearly annoyed at sometimes unsubtle American and British demands to provide more, there was little to do but to accede to such pressures, albeit in as small a way as possible, given prevailing circumstances.

---

55. Pearson believed that separate approaches to Washington amid close consultation between London and Ottawa represented the key to the matter. The Americans could in turn suggest combined discussions.

DEA, file 154(S), Pearson to Robertson, 2 February 1948.

56. DEA, file 154(S), minute by St. Laurent on memorandum by Pearson, 27 January 1948.

57. DEA, file 264(S), Pearson to Robertson, 5 March 1948.

The Marshall Plan, or Economic Cooperation Act (ECA), to be administered by an agency based in Washington, was approved by Congress on 3 April 1948, its rocky passage speeded by political events in Europe. In late February, the seizure by Communist elements of the Czech government, followed by the "suicide" of Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, appeared to make military conflict with the Soviet Union imminent. Within a month, highly secret tripartite talks concerning the viability of a North Atlantic military alliance between the United States, United Kingdom and Canada would commence.

Despite the increased American pressure for a greater contribution to European recovery which these political developments brought, Canada remained somewhat obdurate. A request from the United Kingdom for permission to draw \$15 million for the month of April on the Canadian line of credit, with the understanding that this amount would be retroactively repaid when the European Recovery Programme came into effect, was rebuffed, as Canada chose to reserve any action on international credit matters until prospects for the 1948 crop year became known. From London, Norman Robertson, deeply disturbed by heightening tensions on the European continent, objected to this approach which to him seemed myopic, stating that "...it would be a mistake to urge too far our unwillingness to advance such a comparatively small amount of further credit." In Washington, Hume Wrong reacted in similar fashion, and confirmed Canadian fears that the Americans would be shocked by Canada's decision not to grant further credit to Britain for the time being. However assurances from the United States that the United Kingdom would receive \$375 million of ECA aid between the passage of the legislation and the end of June, eventually helped to persuade Ottawa to agree to allow the British to draw on Canadian credit at \$3.5 million per week for the first two weeks of April. In his message to London, St. Laurent underscored the temporal nature of this assistance and reaffirmed his government's intention to review the entire situation in September.<sup>58</sup>

In a narrower sense, the possibility and extent of off-shore purchases in Canada under the aegis of the European Recovery Programme continued to preoccupy officials in the East Block. As Canada had

---

58. DEA, file 5296-C-40 (Soward Papers), "Problems of Economic and Financial Foreign Policy", pp. 18-19.



given notice that it intended to reconsider its creditor relationship with the United Kingdom in September, it would, policy planners believed, make a good deal of sense to inform the State Department of this intention directly, as awareness of this fact could evoke a favourable American response to the prospect of ECA purchases in Canada. With respect to the ultimate course of action in September, Robertson, the acknowledged sage in these matters, ventured to suggest that there existed two variables, not one, which would influence the ultimate decision of the Canadian Government. "It is true," he cabled from Canada House, "...that if there is a large wheat crop, we will be in a better position by the fall to grant further credit. But equally it seems to me we will be in a better position if by that time there has been a large volume of off-shore purchasing in Canada."<sup>59</sup> In other words, the Americans should be convinced that the amount of additional credit Canada would be able to offer would be directly attributable to the quantity of United States dollar purchases made in Canada out of ECA funds until September.

The purpose of conversations which those Canadian officials involved in the interdepartmental aspect of European recovery had with their American counterparts in Washington in May was to provide Canadian estimates of the balance of payments between Canada and the United Kingdom for the second calendar quarter of 1948 - British statistics usually exhibited great variance - as well as to present to the United States a list of Canadian commodities and services available for purchase by recipient countries between April and July. Not surprisingly, the Canadians were also charged with expressing Canada's interest for a concrete form of association between Canada and the United States on European matters.

To the extent that Canadian products could be generally identified, the discussions were encouraging, however insofar as an

---

59. DEA, file 264(S), cable no. 507, Robertson to St. Laurent, 9 April 1948. Robertson's influence on Canada's politico-economic approach to European recovery cannot be underestimated. He had ready access to everyone at Whitehall, including the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, and was listened to most carefully in Ottawa. More often than not his recommendations were those which were followed, frequently over opposition from senior officials of other departments.

enhanced relationship was concerned, despite frank admissions from nearly all United States officials that close bilateral association was desirable, if not essential, the Americans could do no more than explain that "the organization was still in the embryonic stage, and they were not in a position to discuss with Canada even generalities." In addition, no thought had yet been given to the question of off-shore purchases, so vital to Canadian policy planning. According to Richard Bissell, the Assistant Deputy Administrator of the Economic Cooperation Agency (ECA), Canada had to ensure that it would be adequately represented and its interests put forward at Paris, which in due course would likely replace Washington as the centre of gravity of the European Recovery Programme.<sup>60</sup>

Canada was not unprepared. Whereas the financial aspect of European recovery, at least with respect to off-shore purchases in Canada remained cloudy, the Economic Cooperation Agency's programming through the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC),<sup>61</sup> the organism which eventually emerged in response to Secretary Marshall's speech, represented an area where Canada could garner advantages. S.D. Pierce, the External Affairs officer who had relinquished ambassadorial responsibilities in Mexico in order to monitor European recovery in Paris, concluded that Canada's primary and immediate task was to see that each individual country recipient of ECA assistance nominated Canada as its preferred country of supply when it would be both in the Canadian interest and that of the entire programme to do so. Canada's trade commissioners in the field should aggressively continue to seek commercial opportunities as before, and refer the more complicated question of financing, either by ECA grant, loan or by "free dollars" to Ottawa.<sup>62</sup> To this end, Pierce convened a meeting of all Canadian trade commissioners in Europe. As each recipient country was to bring its individual four year recovery programmes - their preparation required by the Marshall Plan - to Paris

---

60. DEA, file 264-B(S), "Report on Conversations in Washington regarding the European Recovery Programme", 5 May 1948.

61. Today the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

62. DEA, file 264(S), memorandum by S.D. Pierce, "Observations of Canada's Participation in E.R.P.", 1 June 1948.



to receive peer sanction from all nations comprising the OEEC, Canada clearly expected off-shore purchases to proceed on a *de facto* basis, even if not so formally stipulated in the Economic Cooperation Act.

"Should the United States' 'European Recovery Programme' result in a substantial easing of our United States dollar difficulties," intoned a March 1948 memorandum prepared by the Department of External Affairs for consideration by the Interdepartmental Committee on External Trade Policy, "Canada might be expected to grant additional credits to the United Kingdom."<sup>63</sup> As mentioned above, such expectations were high, particularly in Washington. Buoying American expectations was the fact that the first months of the European Recovery Programme had been good to Canada, with \$400 million of quarterly funds being allocated to the United Kingdom without restriction as to where they could be spent - an unexpected decision on the part of the ECA. Canada appeared to be on the verge of receiving preferential treatment, and spirits soared in Ottawa. By mid-June, Canada had managed to secure a remarkable 22 per cent of total ECA appropriations of over \$6 million and had, without a specific promise, received more than half the allocation for off-shore purchases, largely accounted for by the fortunate fact that the British wheat contracts had been covered by the programme. However there was other hopeful financial news: the import restrictions imposed in November 1947 had evidently had some effect as well, and also by this time, there had been a gain of \$267 million in Canada's American dollar reserves.

Canadian promises to reassess its policy towards European recovery in September had thus far managed to avert any direct pressure from Washington for increased credits, but by mid-summer Canada's improved financial position as well as the seemingly certain election of an isolationist Republican administration in November occasioned a more strident American approach. United States officials now said they wished to see Canada double its existing credit from \$150 million to \$300 million and looked forward to negotiations to affect "a per-

---

63. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 78, file E-40-2, "Memorandum on the European Recovery Programme prepared for the Interdepartmental Committee on External Trade Policy by the Department of External Affairs", 12 March 1948.

manent contributing partnership" between Canada and the ECA.<sup>64</sup> Notwithstanding the fact that Canada had earlier requested a similar commitment, the suggestion for "permanence" had now arisen on the American side and was therefore viewed warily in Ottawa. Predictably, there were similar fears to those which had surfaced when more formalized continental economic integration was envisioned some months earlier: decisions would inevitably be made in Washington and Ottawa would therefore be the recipient of more pressure, not less, and lose whatever multilateral manoeuvrability it once possessed.

A series of meetings during the ensuing months convinced the Americans how tenacious their Canadian counterparts could be to what were perceived as covetous designs on a country which was easing itself out of a financial crisis. The discussion between the two sides eventually devolved into one of statistical interpretation: the Americans believed Canada was profiting too much from ECA purchases, whereas the Canadians believed their country was barely holding its own, and even with a bumper wheat crop, the most which could be expected would be a simple reinstatement of the British credit in September. When United States officials conceded that increased Canadian credits would neither enhance nor damage the European Recovery Programme one way or another, Congressional suasion being a more fitting rationale for the Canadian augmentation they desired, Canada had all but won a most strenuous battle. Concerns over the volume of off-shore purchases in Canada continued, but to a lesser degree, during the last months of 1948.

Although the Canadian exchange position slowly improved, the rate of amelioration was insufficient to prevent a massive devaluation of the pound and to a lesser extent, of the Canadian dollar, in the autumn of 1949. By that time, political developments - the Berlin blockade and airlift, events in Korea and the Middle East - had, together with economic factors, dashed the hope for freer multilateral trade, which Canada had shared with other nations. Rampant protectionism once again appeared to be at hand.

Canada's participation in the Marshall Plan graphically exemplified an evolution in its economic relations with the United

---

64. For a more thorough account, see R.D. Cuff and J.L. Granatstein, *American Dollars - Canadian Prosperity, Canadian-American Economic Relations, 1945-50*, (Toronto, 1978), pp. 110-124.



Kingdom, which in great measure paralleled the political changes analyzed in an earlier chapter. Although Canada's post-war financial assistance to Britain was certainly the logical extension of measures taken during the war, the \$1.25 billion credit extended following it was in the main motivated more by self-interest than altruism. In order to secure continued access to the British market, it was necessary to help finance the United Kingdom balance of payments deficit. Underneath all their idealism and explanations that such a substantial credit arrangement would meet short run financial difficulties and promote the common objective of freely convertible currencies and expansive global trade - all very true - Canadian commercial planners earnestly sought a broader market base for Canadian products in the United Kingdom. Nonetheless, by 1948, Canada had provided over \$6.5 billion in financial assistance to Britain, no insignificant amount, even by today's standards. This sum included an astonishing \$35 million in private contributions through voluntary agencies.<sup>65</sup> Traditional ties, though often relegated to sentimental status, still appeared to bind.

It was not surprising that Secretary Marshall's call for the European countries to examine the feasibility of a customs union, as an evident prerequisite to United States financial assistance,

---

65. An approximate breakdown of Canadian financial assistance to the United Kingdom follows:

<u>Wartime Measures</u>	<u>Dollars</u>
- repatriation of British-held securities . . . .	800 million
- interest-free loan . . . . .	700 "
- purchase of U.K. interests in	
Canadian war plants . . . . .	200 "
- gift for purchase of war supplies . . . . .	1,000 "
- Mutual Aid . . . . .	2,162 "
- Voluntary Relief (war and post-war) . . . . .	35 "
 <u>Post-War Measures</u>	
- 2% loan (1946) . . . . .	1,250 "
- Cancellation of British Commonwealth	
Air Training Plan indebtedness . . . . .	425 "
TOTAL . . . . .	6,572 "

SOURCE: DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2081, file AR 13/8, Pt. I, memorandum, "Canada's Financial Aid to the United Kingdom, n.d. (October 1948).

sparked great interest among Canadian officials. The general concept was, as has already been noted, congruent with their own proclivities. "Suggest you consider implications of western European customs union," Norman Robertson cabled from London shortly after Marshall's Harvard speech, "...not only in terms of its probable direct effects on volume and direction of Canadian exports, but as [a] means of underwriting our general political interest in [Europe's] stability and prosperity."<sup>66</sup> Canadian encouragement of closer European economic integration, it was felt, would add an element absent from United States endorsement of the same, in that such support would emanate from a Commonwealth member, and a beneficiary, albeit nominal, of current preferential arrangements. The High Commissioner's recommendation, it should be remembered, belied a conviction that closer economic integration could have a more direct application on a North American scale.

A European study group established under the OEEC and charged with examining the viability of a customs union, engendered a useful exchange of economic data, however failed to provoke much enthusiasm among European countries for the concept. Though convinced of the fact, but not wishing to offend the Americans, the Europeans were loath to admit that *ad hoc* arrangements for economic cooperation through the OEEC would be more practical than the unwieldy theoretical framework inherent in a customs union. Canadian analysts, who had heeded Robertson's suggestion to study the question, concluded that from a strictly economic standpoint, the United Kingdom had a vital role to play in European recovery. Concurrently, it was no less essential that Britain's economic relationship with the Commonwealth, which before the war received 40% of British exports and in turn furnished 87% of all imports, be maintained, if not expanded.<sup>67</sup> Canada was more amenable to recognize the necessity of this dichotomy than its Commonwealth peers, notably Australia and New Zealand, which, being integral components of the sterling area, were somewhat apprehensive of the domestic economic and political difficulties a European customs union could cause.

---

66. DEA, file 264(S), cable no. 994, Robertson to Pearson, 19 June 1947.

67. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, memorandum, "The Economic Aspects of Western Union", 10 September 1948.



Since Canada's traditional role in international commerce had followed the sides of the North Atlantic triangle, a customary pattern which in the immediate post-war period had been artificially supported with grants and loans, the trade surpluses attributable to the European Recovery Programme presented a rather distorted picture. Canada's special overseas markets for agricultural products could suffer through European economic integration, particularly as a result of the economies of scale between customs union members and a natural propensity for the United Kingdom to divert purchases to other sterling nations; the loss of Canada's preferential status in United Kingdom markets could therefore dictate some adjustment in Canadian production. The alternative, viewed with optimism by the denizens of the East Block, was that "...in giving up U.K. preferences Canada might obtain general access to the whole market of the countries in the Customs Union in a fashion which could compensate for any loss in Commonwealth preferences."<sup>68</sup> It was increasingly realized that the quest for a counterweight to United States economic dominance, to become one of the great legacies of the war, could represent a significant tenet of Canadian foreign policy in future years, particularly as Canada's interest in Commonwealth preferences became ever more peripheral.<sup>69</sup> It was also at this time that plans for the concept of North Atlantic integration, Canada's singular contribution to the strategic talks already underway, neared fruition.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, visited Ottawa in late September 1948, in order both to re-examine the bilateral financial relationship and to present to Canada the United Kingdom's "four-year plan" for economic recovery, one of the stipulations of the Economic Cooperation Act. His visit provoked another round of Cabinet bickering which predictably centered on the role which agricultural products were to assume in any new bilateral economic configuration. It was on this subject that the opinions of Louis St. Laurent, already leader of the Liberal Party and soon to succeed Mackenzie King as

---

68. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 61, "Memorandum on the Proposed European Customs Union", n.d. (September 1948).

69. Using Europe as an economic counterweight, or "Third Option" eventually became an articulated policy of the government of Pierre Trudeau in 1973.



Prime Minister, prevailed. He chided his colleagues for expecting the United Kingdom to do the impossible, which was to continue to buy some Canadian agricultural products at an economic disadvantage. It was unrealistic to believe, he argued, that the United Kingdom would continue to represent a market where Canada's trade could operate as before the war. Rather, one should perceive the matter as that of a broader European market, or self-supporting area, which could serve as a buffer zone between East and West.<sup>70</sup> St. Laurent's opinions were echoed by his own successor and the Cabinet's newest member, Lester Pearson.

In addition, further financial assistance from Canada to the United Kingdom and possibly other European countries was both essential and unavoidable, for as Acting Under-Secretary of State Escott Reid quipped, "The Lord, and the United States, loveth a cheerful giver."<sup>71</sup> Talks with the United States on aspects of the Canadian financial review, also conducted in September, confirmed that Canada would not retreat from projected disbursements for the period July 1948 to June 1949 of \$60 million in credits to the United Kingdom, \$72 million to other ERP countries, \$6 million in direct relief, and \$57 million from the wheat price differential.<sup>72</sup> Cripps

---

70. DEA, file 154(S), "Memorandum for the Secretary of State for External Affairs", by H.O. Moran, 18 September 1948. L.B. Pearson was appointed Secretary of State for External Affairs on 10 September 1948.

71. *Ibid.*, Escott Reid, "Memorandum to the Secretary of State for External Affairs: Visit of Sir Stafford Cripps", 18 September 1948.

72. DEA, file 264(S), memorandum, "Canadian-United States ERP Discussions", 27-29 September 1948. In London, Robertson met with Cripps before his departure and led the discussion along more esoteric lines. The High Commissioner expressed his concern at the prospect of a division of the world into two trading blocs (sterling and dollar) with only a minimum of trading relations between them. The decision evinced in the British four-year plan to conclude rigid bilateral agreement with other European countries, thereby eventually bringing them into the sterling area, was therefore of concern to such a nation as Canada which relied heavily on trade. In addition, United States reactions could prove to be negative and could impair American attitudes to the Commonwealth and the incipient North Atlantic alliance. Cripps in turn expressed his doubt that continuation of present trends would result in the dichotomy foreseen by Robertson. He was correct. DEA, file 154(S), A.E. Ritchie, "Notes on Dinner Conversations with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Interested United Kingdom Officials", 3 September 1948.



would have no other choice but to accept the Canadian position with gratitude as a *fait accompli*.

For Canada, there was little to fear from Commonwealth economic intrigue. The Meeting of Prime Ministers convened in London following the Chancellor's visit to Ottawa, and although financial questions constituted a large portion of the agenda, the combination of the Cripps' visit and Norman Robertson's smooth presence as interim leader of the Canadian delegation - replacing an ailing Mackenzie King until St. Laurent arrived - ensured an absence of ruffled feathers. Indeed, Cripps repeatedly stressed the importance which the sterling countries must accord to Canada, both as a source of essential supply and as an expedient link with the dollar area. Also, the United Kingdom would in practice offer preferential treatment to Canada over other dollar countries.<sup>73</sup> A proposal to establish further economic consultative machinery, in addition to the existing Commonwealth Economic Committee which had been established years earlier by the Imperial Conference, was routinely resisted by the Canadians, it not being perceived as having any useful purpose other than the promotion of trade within the sterling bloc. Moreover, its creation could pose difficulties with the United States. The suggestion eventually withered away, but not before Robertson recommended Canadian membership for the sole reason that if Canada was not party to the Commonwealth's deliberations, "the committee may get into all sorts of mischief."<sup>74</sup> Such a confident attitude on Canada's part would have been unthinkable in Commonwealth councils only a few years earlier.

Canada's role in the making of peace in Europe on the political and strategic level could not be assumed as having been in any way profound. Its financial contributions to European recovery, on the other hand, when examined on a proportionate basis, come much nearer to fitting that description. Having per force and by design abandoned its pre-war view of the world, in favour of a new multilateralism, Canada nonetheless sought a re-ordering of the traditional

---

73. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 107, file U-10-11, cable no. 1780, Robertson to Pearson, 12 October 1948.

74. DEA, file 50023-40, cable no. 1809, Robertson to Pearson, 14 October 1948.

North Atlantic triangle in the immediate post-war period. Washington had become the economic base of the triangle, and, in order to avoid being inexorably drawn into rigid alignment, Canada had to maintain in large measure its relationship with the United Kingdom and forge new links with what would become a reconstituted and rejuvenated Europe. Failure to pursue this restructured triangular pattern, and a reluctance on the part of the Europeans to accept its efficacy, even for themselves, as the British four-year plan seemed to indicate, could inhibit the trend toward political and military integration among the North Atlantic countries. "It is therefore in the national interest of Canada," Escott Reid wrote in the autumn of 1948, "to do everything we can to diminish the possibility that economic developments in the North Atlantic countries may in the long run make impossible the success of those political and military developments which are today the main goal of Canadian foreign policy."<sup>75</sup> A new internationalism was at hand.

---

75. DEA, file 154(S), memorandum by Escott Reid, 24 September 1948.



## CHAPTER IX

### EPILOGUE: NEW COMMITMENTS NOW NECESSARY

The exigencies of the war as well as its legacy forced change in Canadian foreign policy during the 1940s. A policy of commitments only when absolutely necessary, the cautious philosophy most closely associated with Prime Minister Mackenzie King, who presided over the Department of External Affairs for most of the period, gradually eroded to reveal what could best be identified as an approach characterized by "enlightened self-interest". This evolution, which the preceding chapters have sought to articulate, came, some would agree, in response to *force majeure*, but also as a result of deliberate policy direction, masterminded in part by a handful of bright minds resident in this same Department. They espoused a conviction that Canada should be accorded its rightful place in the new world order. Their wish to see Canada's chief instrument of policy, the functional principle, enshrined with more direct economic and strategic interests, as befitting the middle power which Canada had aspired to become, provided the catalyst for most of the nation's bilateral and multilateral initiatives. Status and recognition were significant, yet

although traditional geopolitics would ensure the maintenance of the shorter but vital side of the North Atlantic Triangle, diminishing British influence, both constitutional and economic, together with Canada's broadening relationship with its powerful southern neighbour, its new-found interest in its own hemisphere and Europe, all necessitated realignment. How change came about in these various areas has already been demonstrated; the purpose of this epilogue is to convey just how much further it could and would go, particularly with respect to what had rapidly become the grand issues of the day, the dawn of the atomic age and the deterioration of East/West relations.

As negotiators at the International Civil Aviation Conference at Chicago in 1944 all too readily noticed, Canada lay astride the air routes of a world which could now be best perceived through polar geographic projections, Mercator's "Eurocentric" perspective being overly symbolic of distances once judged infinite. Two events - the use of the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, and the revelation of the existence in Canada of an espionage ring controlled by the Soviet Union a month later, evoked a sense of unfamiliar vulnerability and did much to once and for all eradicate the "fire-proof house" isolationist theory of Canadian policy which had prevailed between the wars. The Prime Minister, who in apocalyptic tones had earlier identified the atomic weapon as one which could perpetuate "dread among nations" and "could mean the destruction of civilization",<sup>1</sup> was later aghast that the Russians had penetrated his own Department of External Affairs, among others, in order to acquire the secret of the bomb's manufacture.<sup>2</sup>

---

1. King's diary reflections followed discussions with British High Commissioner Malcolm MacDonald on the subject. King Diary, 24 February 1945.

2. After initially trying to assure Norman Robertson that the revelations were those of an individual who had perhaps incurred the displeasure of the Soviet Embassy, he later discovered that the penetration had been more extensive than initially feared. "They went right into our Department of External Affairs ... in the cypher room there was an agent of the Russians who had seen and knew all our cyphers and had known what they contained." Moreover, the British High Commission and National Research Laboratories in Ottawa and Montreal had also been infiltrated with people providing clandestine information to the Russians. King Diary, 6-7 September 1945.



Having played a minor role in what during the war had gradually become a tripartate atomic partnership with the United States and United Kingdom, Canada's collaboration toward the peaceful use of atomic energy, through the construction of an experimental pile at Chalk River, was significant, all the more so since Canada was the sole producer of the essential ingredient, uranium oxide. The management of Canada's contribution rested with C.D. Howe, the indefatigable Minister of Munitions and Supply and with Dr. C.J. Mackenzie of the National Research Council.<sup>3</sup> Neither Mackenzie King nor the senior officials of his ministry were kept *au courant* with scientific developments.

Consequently, following the destruction of Hiroshima, the officers of the Department of External Affairs were confronted with the daunting task of establishing a comprehensive international atomic policy where before there had been none. Hume Wrong was quick off the mark, advising the Prime Minister that control of the weapon should rest with the United Nations. Such a denouement would of course have been admirably consistent with stated Canadian policy towards international organization in general, and would, according to Wrong, be determined by the attitudes taken by the British and American governments. Whether or not the secret of the bomb's manufacture would be preserved, shared or independently arrived at by other countries was still very much an open and unsettling question, as was whether uranium supplied by Canada would remain the principal ingredient. The possibility that the discovery of the atomic bomb could heighten tension between the great powers instead of reducing it could also not be discounted. This in turn, Wrong prophetically noted, could result in "a serious effort to plant foreign agents in Canada with the object of securing information on secret processes."<sup>4</sup>

---

3. For a detailed analysis of Canada's role in the development of atomic energy, see James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada, Peacemaking and Deterrence*, (vol. 3), (Toronto, 1972), pp. 258-318; John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace, Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*, Vol. I, (Toronto, 1979), pp. 196-228; and Judith H. Loughheed, "The Canadian Role in the Development of Atomic Energy, 1942-1946", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, (Ottawa, 1980).

4. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 234, file 2284, memorandum, Wrong to King, 18 August 1945.



The revelations of the Gouzenko Affair<sup>5</sup> - to become known as the "King Affair" in Moscow upon public disclosure sometime later - vaulted Canada into the forefront of international intrigue. The uncomfortable position accorded Canada and the media attention generated would not wane once the matter was made public in February 1946, as the disclosures eventually necessitated the establishment of a Royal Commission of enquiry which, in addition to corroborating Gouzenko's evidence, brought unc customary and unwanted public exposure to such paragons of selflessness as Norman Robertson.<sup>6</sup>

Policy considerations pertaining to the Gouzenko business and the atomic bomb therefore became inexorably intertwined, and for Mackenzie King a meeting with President Truman and Prime Minister Attlee in Washington in November 1945, which resulted in a Declaration on Atomic Energy, thus took on a greater amount of gravity. On the one hand, international control of the awesome weapon had to be assured, yet on the other, a golden mean of firmness without antagonism as well as a cautious magnanimity had to be pursued with the Soviet Union. For example, publicity of Soviet espionage activities prior to a possible extension of an invitation to the Russians to join in international atomic cooperation could be construed by Moscow as being indicative of premeditated Western unwillingness to include the Soviet Union. Indeed, a great power accord was essential, Robertson informed his interlocutors at the Dominions Office, since the new weapon had by its very existence caused the arrangements for security and the great power veto established at San Francisco to lose much of

---

5. Named after Igor Gouzenko, the Soviet cypher clerk who sought asylum at the Department of Justice on 6 September 1945, claiming to have documents disclosing the existence of a Soviet espionage operation in Canada.

6. Robertson's name had been mentioned during the proceedings of the commission in connection with Fred Rose, the only communist Member of Parliament in Canada, whom Robertson had received at his home in 1941 in order to discuss Nazi activities in Canada. During the war years Robertson maintained a dossier on such subversive elements and continually prodded the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to take a greater interest in these questions, no matter how suspect the source. DEA, Canada House Series, vol. 2081, Robertson to Pearson, 29 October 1946.



their meaning. Moreover, international control of the bomb required harsher measures than had ever been contemplated at that conference. Robertson did not exclude the possibility that the three nations thus far concerned could re-establish great power cooperation by sharing the results of atomic research. This, the Canadian High Commissioner believed, could be "a practical form of control: it would reinforce any scheme of international control worked out between the Governments concerned."<sup>7</sup> Though perhaps overly idealistic, the idea was sound, but simply came too late.

A Canadian memorandum, written for presentation at the Washington meeting and largely the work of Lester Pearson, stipulated that the bomb represented "the greatest threat to man's existence ever conceived, and, paradoxically, the greatest opportunity to realize world peace." Utilizing this dichotomy, the memorandum articulated a strident case for international regulation. The great powers, which in this instance appeared to include Canada,

... should exploit the temporary advantage they now possess in order to bring this weapon under international control, so that it can never be used by anyone. This can be attempted by trading the knowledge of invention and manufacture they alone possess at present, for renunciation by all nations of the right of production or use, except, possibly on orders from the United Nations. This in its turn means international supervision and control of the development and use of atomic energy. If an honest offer of this kind, made by the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada, were refused by any other state, that refusal would certainly disclose which nations were to be trusted and which feared.<sup>8</sup>

The Canadians had clearly presented their case: a gradualist, and above all, multilateral approach was required. President Truman's statement of 27 October, which posited the theory that possession of the atomic bomb be regarded by the world as a "sacred trust", was in the Canadian perspective neither a viable nor logical alternative to international control. The Soviet Union would never

---

7. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 340, file 3677, top secret summary of meeting between Robertson, M.I.5 and Dominions Office officials, 9 October 1945.

8. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, file "Pearson 1945", "Canadian Memorandum on Atomic Warfare", 8 November 1945.



accept such a unilateral "solution" as the final word in power bloc politics. In the event, and once the initial hysteria over bureaucratic unpreparedness had dissipated, British and American views proved to be in accordance with those Canadian, and the more vociferous arguments were withheld for future use.

Apparent tripartite congruence notwithstanding, Mackenzie King intervened with several tactical suggestions to the American draft declaration. He believed that by placing the recommendations of the three nations for control of the bomb in the text before the announcement of the creation of an Atomic Energy Commission under the aegis of the United Nations - the real purpose of the declaration - the three powers, which in his mind really meant the United States, could be prevented from shirking their responsibilities in favour of a "leave it to the UN attitude." Further, the Canadian Prime Minister emphasized the necessity of having adequate safeguards in place before specialized atomic information could be exchanged with other countries. A broader concern noted by Pearson, and one which permeated the Canadian side, was that "...in referring to a Commission of the United Nations, the world organization was being given a very severe test at the outset of its existence." As a result, the three signatory states were "now obligated more than ever...to strengthen and develop the United Nations Organization so that it could successfully meet this and other tests."<sup>9</sup>

In the declaration itself, the three heads of government stressed the reciprocal aspect any exchange of basic scientific information would dictate, and affirmed their scepticism that dissemination of specialized data concerning the practical use of atomic energy without effective, reciprocal and enforceable safeguards acceptable to all nations "...would contribute to a constructive solution of

---

9. King Papers, J1 Series, vol. 389, file "Pearson 1945", despatch no. 2714, Pearson to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 21 November 1945. In the same despatch, Pearson commented on the rampant confusion which had prevailed throughout the drafting of the declaration. British and American drafts had been presented, but not by an amalgamated drafting committee as was customary. Canada did not present its text, and chose instead to amend the American draft. A *bona fide* drafting committee, of which Pearson was a member, was not established until the eleventh hour.



the problem of the atomic bomb. On the contrary, we think it might have the opposite effect."<sup>10</sup> Of greater significance than these words, which in retrospect seem to have taken on a rhetorical hue, was the proposal for the establishment of a United Nations Commission on Atomic Energy, which, empowered to make specific proposals for the exchange of scientific information, disarmament, and effective safeguards, would build mutual confidence.<sup>11</sup> Under the assumption that confidence would increase, and indeed be mutual, the Commission could in turn proceed to more complex, and ultimately secure methods of atomic energy control.

The creation of the Commission was approved by the four great powers in Moscow one month later, and Canada was the only nation not a great power to be granted membership. The appointment of General A.G.L. McNaughton: soldier, scientist and erstwhile Minister of National Defence as Canada's representative, attested to the seriousness with which Canada perceived its new role in the atomic age. McNaughton's tenure at the United Nations would be fraught with frustrations as friction between East and West intensified; his active and sensible presence however helped to assure Canada of a place in the front row of global developments and would underscore the deep sense of commitment Canada would bring to the United Nations then and in the decade to come.

\* \* \*

Mackenzie King did in fact discuss the Gouzenko Affair and its ramifications with Messrs. Truman and Attlee at Washington and together the heads of government reached an understanding that there should be no publicity in the immediate future, and for good reason. Negotiations with the Soviet Union in the Council of Ministers at the time could best be described as arduous and exasperating, with atomic energy adding a new and unpredictable dimension. Several valuable months could also be beneficial to ferret out unsuspecting Soviet

---

10. Canada, Treaty Series, 1945, no. 13, "Declaration on Atomic Energy made by the President of the United States of America, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the Prime Minister of Canada at Washington, November 15, 1945."

11. An expression which would come to epitomize East/West detente some thirty years later.



agents and informers in all three countries. For Canada the situation was very distressing: it dearly wished to see a rapprochement with the Soviet Union among the great powers, yet not entirely at the price of its own security and relationship with the Soviet Union.

The bilateral climate between Canada and the Soviet Union following the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1942 had been correct and cordial, if one-sided. Canada-Russia friendship societies flourished in Canada, the Canadian press was lavish in its praise of the Soviet war effort and did its best to minimize the attention given to ideological and social differences. With the exception of their unpalatable stance on the equality of the British Dominions with the constituent Soviet republics and their stubbornness over the veto at San Francisco, Soviet diplomats had been treated with diffidence by their Canadian counterparts. The Soviet Union was also a recipient of Canadian aid, both through outright loans and UNRRA. Save for the transfer of ownership of the Petsamo nickel mines in Finland, which brought twenty million dollars into Canadian corporate coffers in 1944<sup>12</sup>, the Soviet Union did little or nothing to reciprocate Canada's good will. When Mackenzie King therefore glowingly portrayed the development of relations between his country and the Soviet Union to his Commonwealth colleagues at their 1944 London meeting, he was trying to give substance to an essentially one-sided story.<sup>13</sup>

Instead, Canada was frequently denounced as an imperialist capitalist state, a country which hoarded its wheat while others starved, and as a "puppet" of the United States or colony of the United Kingdom. Canadian officials experienced Soviet obstructionist methods first hand at several international conferences and by 1946, Canadian delegates to multilateral meetings were issued instructions as to how to respond to the most flagrant disruptive tactics employed by their

---

12. Canada, Treaty Series, 1944, No. 29, "Protocol between Canada, the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Providing for the Payment of a Compensation to Canada for Nickel Mines at Petsamo", signed at Moscow, 8 October 1944.

13. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 322, copy of British document P.M.M.(44)7, minutes of meeting, 5 May 1944.



Russian counterparts.<sup>14</sup>

In installing a mission at Kuibyshev, the Russian war-time capital in 1943, and in appointing Dana Wilgress, a senior and highly lauded observer of Soviet affairs as ambassador, Canada demonstrated its desire to accord diplomatic parity to its relations with the last of the great powers. Canada's diplomatic presence in the Soviet Union was therefore as much a symbol of Canada's middle power status as an observation post, the interaction between these two functions being integral to the perspective of Canada's place in the new world order as postulated by the Department of External Affairs. The process was continuous. As has already been noted in the preceding chapters, analysis within the various post-hostilities planning committees in Ottawa also exhibited commentaries on Soviet policy, particularly with respect to the question of ultimate peace in Europe. Despatches from Moscow, either from the hand of Wilgress or his able lieutenant Arnold Smith, and later John Holmes, frequently augmented departmental efforts and usually made their way onto the Prime Minister's desk, further distribution to either the Foreign Office or State Department not being unusual.

In the same manner that the Canadians could not curb their intellectual exuberance over the future of Europe before and after the Paris Conference, so could they not restrain themselves from probing Soviet foreign policy and its global implications. A cynical and even realistic reader might assert that such analyses were all for naught, that Canada had only a minor role to play in what were, by any definition, great power stakes. This view was initially shared to a certain degree in Ottawa, where, as exemplified by the Cabinet War Committee's decision in 1943 not to have Canada become the protecting power for Poland in the Soviet Union - after British and American over-

---

14. For example: "Some Soviet delegates make a practice of trying to goad other delegates into losing their tempers. They then reply coldly and suavely. Though a loss of temper is almost always unwise, this does not mean that a representative should always be restrained and unemotional. There are times when he can usefully be forceful, spirited, eloquent and blunt." Reid Papers, vol. 5, file 11, untitled memorandum, n.d. (1946).



tures to do so - prudence prevailed.<sup>15</sup>

However in the next few years, the beliefs of the officers of the Department of External Affairs and the political pragmatism of their political masters became remarkably consonant. Canada, it was strongly believed, had a direct interest in the temper of relations between the Soviet Union and the United States, the latter, since the Ogdensburg Agreement of 1941, being a military ally of Canada. The existence of the atomic bomb, not to mention the Marshall Plan, had added even greater import to this continental relationship. Churchill's famous "iron curtain" speech at Fulton, Missouri in March 1946, which divided departmental opinion, was seen as an illustration of changing values. Aside from the obvious reasons for producing detailed studies within the East Block, the opportunity to create discursive and academic pieces on a subject, or to reply to them in a similar manner, strengthened morale in the Department and honed skills which would prove invaluable in the numerous multilateral encounters to come. In the case of tripartite deliberations for a North Atlantic treaty, the Canadians would not have long to wait.

The work of Dana Wilgress, a fluent Russian speaker who had begun his career as a trade commissioner in the Soviet Union in the 1920s, set the tone. In a despatch reflecting upon the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers which transpired in October 1943, Wilgress stated that following the war, the Soviet Union would do everything possible to maintain a free hand in Eastern Europe and would be wary indeed of American altruism and how it would affect that objective. The Soviet Union hoped for a lengthy period of peace and security to recuperate from the ravages of war, and, according to Wilgress, would have to be assured that collective security, and not the balance of power principle which was evidently preferred, represented the means to this end. "None of this is likely to materialize," concluded the ambassador, "unless the United States commences to realize that the battle for security has to be fought on two fronts - the domestic front against Middle Western isolationism and the foreign front against balance of power and spheres of influence proponents in

---

15. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 425, Cabinet War Committee, minutes, 5 May 1943.



other countries."<sup>16</sup> Given the Soviet concern for a free regional hand, as described by Wilgress, it was not surprising, therefore, that Canada's functional principle garnered little more than a polite nod in Moscow. The last possible thing the Russians wanted were smaller powers requesting a voice in the settlement of Europe.<sup>17</sup>

At the forefront of much of the intellectual activity of the Department of External Affairs, one could predictably find Escott Reid. In August 1947, while several of his colleagues were preoccupied with the implementation of the Marshall Plan and Canada's own financial crisis, Reid turned his energetic mind to an allied but to him, broader subject: Western Union. It was a concept which occupied policy planners in several countries, and which several months later would be pushed by British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin as a means for uniting Europe against possible Soviet aggression. This action would result in the Brussels Treaty of March 1948. In a lengthy memorandum entitled "The United States and the Soviet Union", Reid attempted to determine the possibility of war between these two powers and the implications for Canadian policy either in the event of war or in the case of persistent bellicosity. Although he concluded that war within the next ten to fifteen years was unlikely, it could be prevented through a closer integration of the Western democracies and a collectively firm but open approach to the Soviet Union. In elaborating upon what this would mean for Canadian policy, Reid stated that American journalist Walter Lippmann's idea of an "Atlantic Community" was already coming into existence through the Marshall Plan.

---

16. DEA, File 7-V(s), despatch no. 50, Wilgress to King, 16 February 1944. Wilgress was also concerned by recent "spheres of influence" theories advanced by members of the Churchill Government.

17. At a meeting in Moscow with Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs Ivan Maisky, Wilgress was subjected to a discourse on the need for a superior voice for the great powers in the formation of a new international organization. Wilgress replied: "I then said that our policy had been enunciated very clearly in a recent speech of the Prime Minister and asked him if this speech had come to his attention. He replied in the affirmative and said, 'Mr. King gave Lord Halifax a very clear answer. Poor Halifax.' The last remark was said with a quiet smile."

DEA, Papers from the Office of the Under-Secretary Series, vol. 823, file 702, despatch no. 79, Wilgress to King, 10 March 1944.



The Canadians would extrapolate upon this concept at a later date. For Canada, therefore, the *Pax Britannica* of the previous century, which had faded with the end of the war and would continue to do so with the emergence of newly independent nations, was to be replaced by a *Pax Americana* in the later twentieth century. In recognition of this fact and in view of evident similarities between Canadian and American sectors of public opinion, Canada, Reid argued, could exert "an influence at Washington out of all proportion to the relative importance of our strength in war compared with that of the United States. The game is difficult, the issues will be delicate, but with skill we can play it successfully."<sup>18</sup>

Reid's thoughts generated a good deal of attention and comment among his colleagues. In a highly detailed response, Charles Ritchie, now ensconced as second-in-command in Paris, disagreed with the "maximize influence in Washington theory", because of its apparent exclusivity. He suggested that instead Canada "emphasize as much as possible her independent position and in so doing lend all possible support to a faltering United Kingdom, whose wide international experience "made her a most valuable source for peace." Moreover, Britain could still be used as a counterweight to the pervasive influence of the United States. The maintenance and enhancement of relations with other middle and smaller powers should also not be overlooked, and, of greatest significance in a global context, Canada should continue its very active participation in the United Nations and its specialized agencies.<sup>19</sup>

The Department's Soviet experts did not hesitate to make their views known as well. Dana Wilgress took time from what were proving difficult multilateral trade negotiations in Geneva to

---

18. DEA, File 52-F(s), memorandum, "The United States and the Soviet Union", 30 August 1947. Reid had compiled much of his supporting information from despatches received from Moscow and from George Kennan's famous "X" article, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947), pp. 566-582.

19. DEA, File 52-F(s), untitled memorandum, Ritchie's comments on Reid's paper, *op.cit.*, 6 November 1947. In Washington, Wrong shared Ritchie's views. *Ibid.*, "Comment on Draft Memorandum dated August 30th Entitled 'United States and Soviet Union'", 3 December 1947.



state that the memorandum should offer a more finely tuned historical perspective but also urged that "...we should once and for all stop arguing about the proper method of dealing with the Soviet Union and give every support to that policy of firmness upon which the United States is embarking..."<sup>20</sup> Arnold Smith, for his part, dismissed the entire "bi-polarity" thesis of the possibility of war arising out of the interplay of two great concentrations of power. In a letter to Pearson on the subject of the Reid memorandum, he advanced the view that the danger of war would arise almost exclusively from the expansionist policies pursued by the Soviet Union, since in the Kremlin, "offence" and "defence" were synonymous. Smith also advocated a form of Western union as the best response to the security threat posed by the Soviet Union, but went much further in proposing that the Soviet Union should be made to withdraw from the United Nations. By such an action, "an overwhelming and effective preponderance of strength in the non-Soviet three-quarters of the world" could be organized, thus serving to reduce the prospects of war.<sup>21</sup> In espousing this opinion, Smith was very much in the minority among his colleagues, who had placed most of their hopes for the future in that organization and its universality.

Smith also produced a lengthy and comprehensive paper entitled "The Russians and the Rest of Us" which convincingly articulated his thesis and which, as one would by now expect, generated another flurry of opinions and analyses from Canadian policy makers in both Ottawa and farther-flung points on the globe. From London, Robert Ford indicated that he thought the study a useful exercise, however chose to debate some of the finer points concerning the

---

20. DEA, File 52-F(s), Wilgress to Pearson, 6 November 1947.

21. DEA, File 52-F(s), Smith to Pearson, 10 December 1947. At the time, Smith was on a secondment to the National Defence College at Kingston, Ontario. His friend from his Moscow days, George Kennan, had accepted a similar position south of the border. Smith would serve as Canadian Ambassador to the Soviet Union in the early 1960s and become the first Secretary General of the Commonwealth, a position he held from 1965 to 1975.



application of Marxist doctrine in the Soviet Union.<sup>22</sup> At the military mission in Berlin, General Maurice Pope was less kind: "I get impressions both of reality and unreality, of a sense of that which is possible combined with a rarified academic point of view that is hardly of this though world in which we live. And the effect of one is pretty well to neutralize the other."<sup>23</sup>

By far the most realistic, and in retrospect, prescient, analysis emanated from the Canadian Embassy in Moscow where John Holmes laboured diligently as Chargé d'Affaires during the difficult years of 1947 and 1948. Holmes applauded the efforts of Smith but admitted that although he himself had been in Moscow for some time, he still found it difficult to reach any conclusions about many aspects of Soviet policy. Holmes commented that "this exceptionally rational and logical discussion was perhaps too logical. It is a great mistake to underestimate the strength and determination of this country, but I wonder if we do not fall into the error sometimes of assuming it to be more monolithic than it is."<sup>24</sup> Specifically, Holmes believed that the Soviet regime was at times capable of brilliant action, as in orchestrating the change of government in Prague, but also of considerable bungling, as demonstrated by various gratuitous actions which only hastened the passage of the European Recovery Programme by the United States Congress. Though economically the government was capable of impressive if ruthless measures, there were also monumental errors of judgment made by the leadership, "a mixture of men with brilliant minds and fanatical ignoramuses."<sup>25</sup>

---

22. DEA, File 52-F(s), Ford to Reid, 6 April 1948. In future years, Ford would become "the" expert on the Soviet Union in the Department of External Affairs and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps in Moscow. Now in retirement, he continues to serve as "Special Advisor to the Under-Secretary on East/West Relations".

23. DEA, File 52-F(s), Pope to Reid, 28 January 1948. Smith and Reid have both readily acknowledged that their views were at times ignored when first presented, but as circumstances changed, their superiors often tended to be less sceptical. Interviews with Arnold Smith, 6 June 1980 and Escott Reid, 12 June 1980.

24. DEA, File 52-F(s), Holmes to Reid, 2 September 1948.

25. *Ibid.*



Human frailty, as in the Western democracies, also played its part in the Soviet Union, where it perhaps merited greater study because it was less tangible.

The foregoing account of perceptions of the Soviet question has provided only a brief glimpse at the extent and depth of intellectual discussion within the Department of External Affairs. One is, however, able to discern that during the five years from when the Department officially went to war in 1943, the formation of policy within it, as a result of a dialectic of various points of view, had become more sophisticated, balanced and pragmatic, the tone being set for Canada's next decade. The initial goal had been one of international order through forms of multilateral organization which would embody the needs and aspirations of all nations. The transition from this *Weltanschauung* to one which would include an important security element, either in the name of the United Nations or through a regional grouping under its Charter was made effortlessly, largely due to a reliance on special relationships with the United States and United Kingdom, expanding relationships with other countries, and the existence of a fundamental multilateral *raison d'être*, the functional principle. The central issue was clearly one of avoiding a military confrontation between eastern and western power blocs, something which solutions such as the "fool's paradise" of another Kellogg-Briand Pact could simply not prevent. As both the United States and Soviet Union entertained misconceptions about the other, based in part upon a reciprocal ignorance of the other's history and ideology, as well as a wariness over their respective motives, flaws in their policies could rapidly become fissures if rationality did not prevail.<sup>26</sup>

As a middle power with much at stake, it was believed in Ottawa that Canada could provide a rational but self-interested contribution towards the maintenance of peace through collective security. In pursuing this conviction, Canadian officials played a major

---

26. DEA, File 52-F(s), memorandum by Hume Wrong and Hume Wright, "Influences Shaping the Policy of the United States towards the Soviet Union," Washington, 4 December 1947. Also Ford to Reid, 26 February 1948.



role in the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty.<sup>27</sup> Canada's overall approach to the concept of Western union was perhaps best defined by a distinguished British scholar as being guided by a profound concern "...that British and American policy should keep in step", and that the American initiative in European reconstruction "...has been doubly welcome in that it reconciled Canada's interests as a North American and as a British nation."<sup>28</sup>

In Ottawa there was less cool academic detachment about Canada's role. "One reason why we need an Atlantic Union," Lester Pearson wrote Hume Wrong, "is that we must establish in peace time some international constitutional machinery which could be used in war time as the basis for a supreme war council, or some such body." There was a functionalist aspect as well in that the existence of such machinery would enable "governments which have wisdom and maturity to have greater influence on the formulation of policy than would be warranted by their mere power alone."<sup>29</sup> The experiences of the war continued to rankle.

In fashioning this Canadian outlook, Pearson and Reid worked together very closely, the former frequently driven and won over by the crusading fervour of the latter. In a unique development, both men did some of their policy-making in public, delivering speeches on their favourite subject to boards of trade and meetings of learned societies. They were more forthright in their classified prose, with phrases dealing with the purpose of the proposed pact as a rallying point for the spiritual as well as military and economic resources of Western Christendom against Soviet totalitarianism creeping into the occasional memorandum.<sup>30</sup> Ever the consummate drafter, Reid com-

---

27. For a superlative account of the making of the North Atlantic Treaty, see Escott Reid, *Time of Fear and Hope, The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*, (Toronto, 1977). Other excellent studies include James Eayrs, *In Defence of Canada: Growing Up Allied* (vol. 4), (Toronto, 1980); and John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace, Canada and the Search for World Order*, vol. 2, (Toronto, 1982).

28. King Papers, J4 Series, vol. 237, File 2351, copy of a paper by Nicholas Mansergh of Chatham House, 27 July 1948.

29. Reid Papers, vol. 6, Pearson to Wrong, 21 May 1948.

30. Reid Papers, vol. 6, memorandum by Reid and revised by Pearson, "Proposed Pact of Mutual Assistance", 14 March 1948.



composed a "Treaty of the Free World" as he had done for the San Francisco Conference a few years earlier and also wrote of the need for a North Atlantic Parliament led by Paul-Henri Spaak of Belgium, General Dwight Eisenhower and Lester Pearson.<sup>31</sup> Such ardour was not always welcome to other members of the Department, as for example Norman Robertson, who, though usually of a tolerant demeanour, on one occasion reproached Reid for his language: "Specifically, I would cut out all the three-decker phrases...most of the double-barrelled ones, and any remaining echoes from the Anglican prayer book."<sup>32</sup>

If Canadian officials appeared overly fervent at times it was for good reason, for the Soviet Union's actions in Europe, from the collapse of Czechoslovakia, to pressures on Turkey and Iran, the Berlin Blockade, as well as the uncertainty of imminent elections in Italy, all heightened a feeling of nervous tension and impending crisis. Apparent Soviet designs on Norway prompted Clement Attlee to inform Mackenzie King that "events are moving even quicker than we at first apprehended...in this situation only a bold move can avert the danger and the pace already set by Russia tells us that there is no time to lose..."<sup>33</sup> The British Prime Minister concluded that the most effective course to follow would be to take early steps under the United Nations Charter to form a regional Atlantic pact of mutual assistance. Moreover, he proposed that officials of the United States, United Kingdom and Canada meet in Washington for preliminary discussions towards this end. Mackenzie King, undoubtedly realizing that the time for prudent procrastination had long since passed,

---

31. Reid Papers, vol. 6, "Memorandum for the Under-Secretary", 18 March 1948.

32. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 112, file U-40-4, cable no. 1987, Robertson to Reid, 9 November 1948. In response Reid stated that much of the draft had already been amended, some of the language having been taken verbatim from correspondence between Messrs. King and Attlee. Further, "Canadian adherence to the proposed Treaty will constitute a revolution in Canadian foreign policy and it would be easier to get full public support for this revolution if the Treaty is as easily understandable as possible. It would also, I hope, not be written in the language of tired civil servants. That is all I am after." *Ibid.*, cable no. 1908, Reid to Robertson, 11 November 1948.

33. Reid Papers, vol. 6, cable no. 220, Attlee to King, 10 March 1948.

cabled a precise and immediate reply: "I am deeply impressed with the gravity of these developments...collective measures seem to me to be essential to establish some sense of security and to preserve the peace."<sup>34</sup> Thus, for the first time in its history, Canada was poised to enter into a peace-time alliance, an action dictated by necessity and facilitated by an enhanced and confident presence on the international stage. Commonwealth defence had been perceived as archaic and impractical; complete continental integration too rigid. An agreement with both the United States and United Kingdom, however, to include an unspecified number of continental European countries, would have great appeal, and would be more in keeping with the evolution and direction of Canadian policy.

The preliminary tripartite discussions in Washington, which concluded at the end of March 1948, established the groundwork for multilateral talks at a later date. The fact that these and subsequent deliberations were held in the American capital was indicative of a radical change in United States peacetime foreign policy, as well as the Truman Administration's determination to adopt a politically bi-partisan approach acceptable to Congress. In representing Canada, Pearson agreed that a preliminary paper should be circulated in the form of a United States proposal, so that if leaks should occur, the entire venture would not be construed by other governments - notably the French - as having been the work of three countries. With Pearson's assistance, two initial ideas were temporarily discounted: that Canada and the United States accede to the European Brussels Pact already in existence and that the United States (possibly with Canada) issue a unilateral declaration of mutual assistance, thereby establishing a sort of North Atlantic Munroe Doctrine. The former suggestion was criticized for not allowing for a comprehensive structure should other countries wish to become involved; the latter, by its very unilateral nature would stifle hopes for guarantees of reciprocity - essential in Canadian eyes - and could evoke some public dissatisfaction by its apparent one-sidedness. In this first meeting, senior officials of the three nations recommended that diplomatic approaches be undertaken by the United States to the Brussels signa-

---

34. Reid Papers, vol. 6, cable no. 666, King to Attlee, 11 March 1948.



tories to inform them of plans to conclude a security pact for the North Atlantic Area,<sup>35</sup> and similar demarches should be made to the Nordic countries to ascertain whether they would be prepared to accede to the Brussels Treaty. Of greatest significance in terms of whether a regional security pact would in fact be viable, was the recommendation that the President of the United States make a declaration of American intention in light of the obligations assumed by the Brussels Pact signatories pending the conclusion of a regional pact. Such a declaration would essentially amount to a guarantee that an armed attack against a nation party to the Brussels Treaty would be considered an attack against the United States and would be dealt with under the collective self-defence provisions of Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.<sup>36</sup>

While haste appeared to be of the essence, given the prevailing public views at the time that Soviet armies numbering three million men could occupy Europe to the Atlantic coast in a matter of weeks, there was at least some unease that the determination with which North Atlantic consolidation was being carried out could provoke the Russians to engage in equally determined action. From Moscow, John Holmes counselled that in the ensuing months care should be taken to leave the Soviet Union grounds for retreat. But, as he also acknowledged, "Whatever the risks of firmness, the risks of weakness are greater."<sup>37</sup> Canadian attempts to temporize, albeit in a manner which would not directly present the Russians with sufficient latitude to retreat, took the form of a continuing effort to diversify the purposes of the North Atlantic Pact to include provision for a "North Atlantic Community", a concept which had begun to acquire shape in Ottawa at this time. In this instance, the motive of domestic political and economic self-interest could not be overlooked either.

---

35. "Area" was added to the title for reasons of flexibility, as Italy, Greece, Turkey, Iran and other countries at this stage being contemplated as possible signatories or recipients of military guarantees, could lay no claim to Atlantic shoreline.

36. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 112, file U-40-4, memorandum by Pearson, "Security Pact for the North Atlantic Area", 27 March 1948. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter refers to "the inherent right of the individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a member of the United Nations."

37. DEA, File 283(s), Holmes to Pearson, 9 April 1948.

Official discussions in Washington during the summer of 1948 between the United States and the Brussels powers, joined after the initial meetings by Canada, led to predictable differences. There was dissent over which countries should be included in the pact, some such as Italy not really being able to claim an Atlantic presence. Another, Portugal, possessed a government which at least in Ottawa did not meet the standards for membership in a union of Western democracies. In the event, the strategic value of the Azores proved too attractive for the Americans and British to resist. A further problem for the Canadians was the linkage, or in American strategist George Kennan's terms "dumbbell" theory postulated by the United States, which maintained that a pact consisting of the Brussels group on the one hand, linked to a North American unit on the other, would constitute the best arrangement. Canada, with its own North Atlantic triangular relationship, did not wish to see this traditional structure compromised at continental expense, and, in addition, have the prospects for reciprocal guarantees among North Atlantic Treaty signatories diminish.

Lester Pearson, who during the multilateral negotiations in Washington was elevated to the position of Secretary of State for External Affairs, circulated a memorandum to the Cabinet on 4 October 1948 which summarized the discussions to that point and outlined prospects for the second phase of more detailed talks. The proposed treaty's basic purpose would be to provide "the basis for the organization of an overwhelming preponderance of force - military, economic and moral - over the Soviet Union and a sufficient degree of unity to ensure that this preponderance of force may be used as to guarantee that the free nations will not be defeated one by one."<sup>38</sup> Increases in defence expenditures by Canada, an important domestic issue which would have to be considered, would be necessary in any event, Pearson argued, as the existing state of international tension would likely continue. However the rearmament of members of the Pact would be premised on a plan where each country would undertake the task it could perform most efficiently. Canada could therefore expect to expend funds to maintain its own armed forces and industrial machine in a state of readiness and could possibly assist in rearming the Western European countries.

---

38. DEA, File 283(s), "Memorandum to the Cabinet: North Atlantic Treaty", 4 October 1948.



In his memorandum to his Cabinet colleagues, Pearson also presented the foundation of the arguments Canada would expound in the coming months concerning Article 2 of the Treaty, to be known afterward as the "Canadian Article". Mindful of the way Canada had been expected to "tag along" when hostilities commenced in 1939, of its privileged yet minor role at Dumbarton Oaks and in the direction of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, as well as the sobering experience of peacemaking at Paris two years earlier, it was now to be welcomed that the North Atlantic Treaty "establishes a constitutional basis for a devolution of power in peace and war from the Grand Alliance to its organs and agents, as compared with the arrogation of power by the Big Two or the Big Three in the last war." The new minister's words echoed the functionalist thinking prevalent in his department, an outlook he himself had helped to create. Stating that this new international institution would have the potential for growth and adaptation against changing global conditions, Pearson predicted that the "North Atlantic Community", "today a real commonwealth of nations which share the same democratic and cultural traditions", could in the future become a vehicle for political and economic unification.<sup>39</sup>

Thus the focus of Canadian attention and effort became Article 2 of the Treaty. Article 5, which dealt with the "Pledge" to commit troops, where one would suspect Mackenzie King would have placed greater emphasis, had he not been so close to the end of his public career, assumed lesser importance. The balance of payments crisis of the previous year, protracted bilateral financial uncertainty with the United Kingdom, an enhanced commercial relationship with the United States and active participation in the European Recovery Programme all necessitated a more pervasive Canadian concern with

---

39. DEA, File 283(s), "Memorandum to the Cabinet: North Atlantic Treaty", 4 October 1948. The actual article states: "The Parties will contribute toward the further development of peaceful and friendly international relations by strengthening their free institutions, by bringing about a better understanding of the principles upon which these institutions are founded, and by promoting conditions of stability and well-being. They will seek to eliminate conflict in their international economic policies and will encourage economic collaboration between any and all of them."

multilateral economic questions. The North Atlantic Alliance would not become an exception to this tenet of Canadian foreign policy. As Escott Reid so simply explained Canada's dilemma, "...Canada would, economically speaking, be keeping one foot in the United States camp and one foot in the Western European camp; this would help to blur the sharp edges between the two groups."<sup>40</sup> A sense of balance and proportion in Canadian policy could therefore be maintained.

Although the Americans were initially not enamoured with the proposal to include an economic statement, for fear it would generate confusion with other international agencies already active in the field, they eventually became more amenable to the concept of "some general blessing" to be given in the preamble of the treaty for collaboration amongst members.<sup>41</sup> To some in Ottawa, this would simply not do. Reid urged a higher moralistic tone, and envisioned the aim of the drafters of the Treaty of Rome some years later for a federation with supranational authority. His basic philosophy, moulded during his activist stewardship of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs over a decade earlier, was that international conflict, as perpetrated by the anachronism known as the sovereign state, could be reduced through the efforts of an international body equipped with effective legislative powers.<sup>42</sup> North Atlantic integration was therefore desirable, if not essential.

In Washington Hume Wrong, more appreciative of the foibles and sensitivities of American domestic politics, repeatedly stated that it was an alliance which was being created, and not a federation. In London, Norman Robertson in large measure shared his colleague's views. Wrong feared that any attempt to identify the agencies to be established in the Treaty would foment disputes over their composition and terms of reference. "I much prefer to get the Treaty first and then debate these matters in a Council, on which we would, of

---

40. DEA, File 154(s), untitled memorandum by Escott Reid, 24 September 1948.

41. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 112, File U-40-4, cable no. 3024, Wrong to Reid, 24 November 1948.

42. Personal letter from Escott Reid to Loring Christie, 10 October 1935. Given to the author by Mr. Escott Reid.



course, be effectively represented."<sup>43</sup> The ambassador was correct, for in the ensuing months, Congressmen would enquire why the Geneva agreements were insufficient to encompass economic collaboration *in toto* and State Department officials would indicate their perhaps premature distaste for some of the activities of the United Nations Economic and Social Council as well as UNESCO.<sup>44</sup>

Lester Pearson waivered between the two polarities presented by his closest advisors, but eventually came down in favour of the necessity to include Article 2 in the North Atlantic Treaty, but for a variety of largely economic reasons which could be supported in the House of Commons. He had now become, first and foremost, a politician. Although American recalcitrance over perceived Congressional dissent was understandable, the United States in fact possessed articles similar to Article 2 in bilateral agreements already negotiated with the Western European countries under the Economic Cooperation Act. As Canada had no such accords, it was believed that Canadian arguments for a strong Article 2 were not unlike those previously advanced by the United States. Further, the article could acquire additional significance as the basis for financial cooperation between Canada and the United Kingdom to balance obligations assumed by Britain to continental Europe under the Organization for European Economic Co-operation. Also, the United States in all likelihood shared Canada's concern over current trading practices promulgated by the United Kingdom, for one, which featured the reduction of imports from hard currency or dollar sources.<sup>45</sup>

With the full support of the United Kingdom and later the other European countries, as well as an important concession on the part of the United States, Canada achieved the inclusion of its article in the North Atlantic Treaty. Had it come to forcing the Canadians' hand on whether to have the Treaty without Article 2, Canada would no doubt have capitulated, as its commitment from the

---

43. Privy Council Office Records, Series 18, vol. 112, file U-40-4, cable no. 3024, Wrong to Reid, 24 November 1948.

44. *Ibid.*, cable no. WA-447, Wrong to Pearson and Reid, 19 February 1949.

45. *Ibid.*, "Memorandum for Cabinet; Proposed North Atlantic Treaty", 16 February 1949.

outset, indeed throughout the development of international organizations during these years, had been to contribute its proportionate share to the maintenance of peace and world order. However the fact that nations initially indifferent or opposed to Canada's position on the North Atlantic Treaty ultimately concurred with Article 2, provided adequate recognition of Canada having been elevated to the rank of a middle power. What has been termed Canada's "golden age" of diplomacy had begun.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY SOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

#### I. Public Archives of Canada

##### (i) Prime Ministers' Records:

William Lyon Mackenzie King

J1 - Primary Correspondence Series

J4 - Notes and Memoranda Series

J13 - Diary

Louis St. Laurent

- Correspondence and Memoranda Series

Lester B. Pearson

- Pre-1948 Series

- Pre-1958 Series

- Diary

##### (ii) Private Collections:

Canadian Institute of International Affairs/Edgar Tarr  
Brooke Claxton Papers Papers

Arnold D.P. Heeney Papers

C.D. Howe Papers

John D. Kearney Papers

Douglas LePan Papers

Kenneth P. Kirkwood Papers

Robert A. MacKay Papers

A.G.L. McNaughton Papers

Paul Martin Papers

Maurice Pope Papers

Escott Reid Papers

Norman A. Robertson Papers

L. Dana Wilgress Papers

Hume Wrong Papers

(iii) Government Records:

## Department of External Affairs:

General Registry Files (at the Department of  
External Affairs)

Canada House Series

Washington Embassy Series

Policy Documents on Foreign Affairs Series

Papers of the Under-Secretary Series

Documents on Canadian External Relations Series

Documents on Newfoundland Series

## Privy Council Office:

Central Registry Files

Minutes and Memoranda of the Cabinet War Committee

## Parliament:

House of Commons, *Debates*

The Senate, *Debates*

Minutes of the House of Commons Standing

Committee on External Affairs

II. Public Records Office: (London)(i) Prime Ministers' Records:

Winston S. Churchill Papers; PREM 1-8

(ii) Private Collections:

Sir Edward Bridges Papers; CAB 21

(iii) Government Records:

## War Cabinet:

Papers; CAB 66

Minutes and Memoranda; CAB 67

Monthly Reports; CAB 68

Minutes and Confidential Annex; CAB 65

## Foreign Office:

Minutes and Memoranda; FO 371

## Dominions Office:

Correspondence; DO 35

Confidential Print; DO 114

Office Papers; DO 121

## Parliament:

House of Commons, *Debates*

House of Lords, *Debates*



III. Interviews

John Baldwin, November 17, 1980.  
Hon. Lord Garner, November 8, 1979.  
James A. Gibson, June 25, 1980.  
John W. Holmes, July 23, 1980.  
George Ignatieff, December 2, 1980.  
Rt. Hon. Jules Leger, September 5, 1980.  
Hon. J.W. Pickersgill, May 28, 1980.  
Escott Reid, June 12, 1980.  
Charles Ritchie, June 20, 1980.  
Gordon Robertson, June 4, 1980.  
Benjamin Rogers, November 19, 1980.  
Arnold Smith, June 6, 1980.

SELECT SECONDARY SOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. BOOKS

Acheson, Dean. *Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1969.

Amery, L.S. *My Political Life*. Vol. III: *The Unforgiving Years*. London: Hutchinson, 1955.

Anderson, Violet (ed.). *The United Nations Today and Tomorrow*. Addresses given at The Canadian Institute of Public Affairs, August 21st to 28th, 1943. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1943.

\_\_\_\_\_. *This is the Peace*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1945.

Angus, H.F. *Canada and the Far East, 1940-1953*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953.

Attlee, C.R. *As It Happened*. London: Heinemann, 1954.

Balawyder, Aloysius. *Canadian-Soviet Relations between the World Wars*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Maple Leaf and the White Eagle: Canadian-Polish Relations, 1918-1978*. East European Monographs Series. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980.



Birkenhead, The Earl of. *The Life of Lord Halifax*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1965.

Bothwell, Robert and Kilbourn, William. *C.D. Howe: A Biography*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979.

Brady, Alexander and Scott, F.R. (eds.). *Canada after the War, Studies in Political, Social and Economic Policies for Post-War Canada*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: MacMillan, 1943.

Brebner, J.B. *North Atlantic Triangle, The Interplay of Canada, the United States and Great Britain*. With an introduction by Donald Creighton. Carleton Library Series No. 30. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1945, 1966.

Brecher, Michael. *Nehru: A Political Biography*. London: Oxford University Press, 1959.

\_\_\_\_\_. *India and World Politics: Krishna Menon's View of the World*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968.

Butler, Lord. *The Art of the Possible: The Memoirs of Lord Butler*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1971.

Campbell, Thomas M. and Herring, George C. (eds.). *The Diaries of Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., 1943-1946*. New York: Viewpoints, 1975.

Clarkson, Stephen (ed.) for the University League for Social Reform. *An Independent Foreign Policy for Canada?* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1968.

Cook, Ramsay. *John W. Diefoe and the Free Press*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963.

Corbett, Percy Ellwood and Smith, Herbert Arthur. *Canada and World Politics: A Study of the Constitutional and International Relations of the British Empire*. London: Faber and Gwyer, 1928.

Creighton, Donald G. *The Forked Road: Canada 1939-1957*. Canadian Centenary Series. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1976.

Cuff, R.D. and Granatstein, J.L. *Ties that Bind: Canadian-American Relations in Wartime from the Great War to the Cold War*. Second Edition. Toronto: Samuel-Stevens Hakkert and Co., (1975), 1977.

---

. *American Dollars - Canadian Prosperity, Canadian-American Economic Relations, 1945-1950*. Toronto: Samuel-Stevens, 1978.

Davies, Raymond Arthur. *Canada and Russia: Neighbours and Friends*. Toronto: Progress Books, 1944.

Dawson, R. MacGregor. *Canada in World Affairs: Two Years of War 1939-1941*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Oxford University Press, 1943.

---

. *William Lyon Mackenzie King; A Political Biography*. Vol. I, 1874-1923. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958.

Dexter, Grant. *Canada and the Building of Peace*. Toronto: Canadian Institute of International Affairs, 1944.

Dilks, David (ed.). *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan, 1933-1945*. London: Cassell, 1971.

Dziuban, S.W. *Military Relations between the United States and Canada, 1939-1945*. Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1959.

Eastman, Samuel Mack. *Canada at Geneva: An Historical Survey and its Lessons*. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1946.

Eayrs, James. *The Art of the Possible*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961.

---

. *In Defence of Canada, Vol. I, From the Great War to the Great Depression*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961.

---

. *In Defence of Canada, Vol. II, Appeasement and Rearmament*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965.

---

. *Diplomacy and its Discontents*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.



- Eayrs, James. *In Defence of Canada, Vol. III, Peacemaking and Deterrence*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *In Defence of Canada, Vol. IV, Growing Up Allied*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.
- Elliott, W.Y. and Hall, H.D. (eds.). *The British Commonwealth at War*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943.
- Esberrey, Joy E. *Knight of the Holy Spirit: A Study of William Lyon Mackenzie King*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.
- Evatt, H.V. *Australia in World Affairs*. Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1946.
- Farrell, R. Barry. *The Making of Canadian Foreign Policy*. Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- Fry, Michael G. *Illusions of Security, North Atlantic Diplomacy, 1918-1922*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.
- Garner, Joe. *The Commonwealth Office, 1925-68*. London: Heinemann, 1978.
- Gibson, J. Douglas (ed.). *Canada's Economy in a Changing World*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Macmillan, 1948.
- Gladwyn, Lord. *The Memoirs of Lord Gladwyn*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1972.
- Glazebrook, G.P. de T. *Canada at the Paris Peace Conference*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1942.
- Gore-Booth, Paul (Lord). *With Great Truth and Respect*. London: Constable, 1974.
- Graham, Roger. *Arthur Meighen, Vol. II: And Fortune Fled*. Toronto: Clark, Irwin, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Arthur Meighen, Vol. III: No Surrender*. Toronto: Clark, Irwin, 1963.

Granatstein, J.L. *Canada's War: The Politics of the Mackenzie King Government, 1939-1945*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Man of Influence: Norman A. Robertson and Canadian Statecraft, 1929-1968*. Ottawa: Deneau Publishers, 1981.

Halifax, The Earl of. *The American Speeches of the Earl of Halifax*. London: Oxford University Press, 1947.

Hamelin, Marcel. *Les Mémoires du Sénateur Raoul Dandurand*. Québec: Laval Université, 1967.

Hancock, Sir Keith. *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, Problems of Nationality, 1918-1936*. London: Oxford University Press, 1937.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, Problems of Economic Policy, 1918-39, Part I*. London: Oxford University Press, 1942.

Harrison, W.E.C. *Canada in World Affairs, 1949-1950*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1959.

Harvey, Heather J. *Consultation and Cooperation in the Commonwealth*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1952.

Heeney, Arnold D.P. *The Things that are Caesar's, Memoirs of a Canadian Public Servant*. With a foreword by John W. Holmes. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

Hillmer, Norman and Stevenson, Garth (eds.). *Foremost Nation: Canadian Foreign Policy and a Changing World*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

Holmes, John W. *Canada: A Middle-Aged Power*. Carleton Library Series, No. 98. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Shaping of Peace, Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*. Vol. I. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Shaping of Peace, Canada and the Search for World Order, 1943-1957*. Vol. II. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982.



- Hooker, Nancy (ed.). *The Moffat Papers, 1919-1943*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956.
- Hull, Cordell. *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*. Vol. 2. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1948.
- Humphrey, John P. *The Inter-American System: A Canadian View*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1942.
- Infeld, Leopold. *Why I Left Canada*. Trans. by Helen Infeld. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1978.
- James, R.W. *Wartime Economic Cooperation; A Study of Relations between Canada and the United States*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1949.
- Keenleyside, Hugh L. *Canada and the United States*. Revised edition. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952.
- Keenleyside, Hugh L. et al. *The Growth of Canadian Policies in External Affairs*. Published for the Duke University Commonwealth Studies Center. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1960.
- Kennan, George F. *Memoirs*. London: Hutchinson, 1968.
- Kennedy, J. de N. *History of the Department of Munitions and Supply*. Ottawa: King's Printer, 1950.
- King, William Lyon Mackenzie. *Canada and the Fight for Freedom*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1944.
- Laurendeau, André. *La Crise de la Conscription*. Montréal: Éditions de Jour, 1962.
- LePan, Douglas. *Bright Glass of Memory; A Set of Four Memoirs*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979.

Lie, Trygve. *In the Cause of Peace*. New York: Macmillan, 1954.

Louis, W.R. *Imperialism at Bay: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire, 1941-1945*. London: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Lower, A.R.M. and Parkinson, J.F. (eds.). *War and Reconstruction: Some Canadian Issues*. Addresses given at the Canadian Institute of Public Affairs, August 15-23, 1942. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1942.

Lyon, Peter (ed.). *Britain and Canada: Survey of a Changing Relationship*. London: Frank Cass, 1976.

MacDonald, Malcolm. *People and Places, Random Reminiscences of the Rt. Hon. Malcolm MacDonald*, London: Collins, 1969.

MacGibbon, D.A. *The Canadian Grain Trade, 1931-1951*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952.

Manning, C.A.W. *The Policies of the British Dominions in the League of Nations*. London: Oxford University Press, 1932.

Mansergh, Nicholas (ed.). *Documents and Speeches on British Commonwealth Affairs, 1931-1952*. Vol. II. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.

Mansergh, Nicholas. *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs, Problems of Wartime Cooperation and Post-War Change, 1939-1952*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Commonwealth Experience*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969.

Massey, Vincent. *What's Past is Prologue, The Memoirs of Vincent Massey*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1963.

Mitrany, David. *A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organisation*. London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1943.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Functional Theory of Politics*. London: The London School of Economics by Martin Robertson, 1975.



Neatby, H. Blair. *William Lyon Mackenzie King, The Lonely Heights*.  
Vol. II, 1924-1932. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962.

\_\_\_\_\_. *William Lyon Mackenzie King, The Prism of Unity*.  
Vol. III, 1932-1939. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1976.

Northedge, F.S. *Descent from Power: British Foreign Policy, 1945-1973*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1974.

Opie, Redvers et al. *The Search for Peace Settlements*. Washington: The Brookings Institute, 1951.

Pearson, Lester B. *Words and Occasions: An Anthology of Speeches and Articles Selected from his Papers by the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Mike: The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, Vol. I, 1897-1948*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

Peat, Louisa W. *Canada: New World Power*. New York: Robert M. McBride, 1945.

Penlington, Norman (ed.). *On Canada: Essays in Honour of Frank H. Underhill*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

Pickersgill, J.W. (ed.). *The Mackenzie King Record*. Vols. 1 & 2, 3 & 4 (with D.F. Forster). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960, 1968, 1970, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_. *My Years with Louis St. Laurent: A Political Memoir*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976.

Plumptre, A.F.W. *Three Decades of Decision, Canada and the World Monetary System, 1944-1975*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

Pope, Maurice. *Soldiers and Politicians: The Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Maurice A. Pope*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.

Reid, Escott. *Time of Fear and Hope: The Making of the North Atlantic Treaty, 1947-1949*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

- Reynolds, P.A. and Hughes, E.J. (eds.). *The Historian as Diplomat: Charles Kingsley Webster and the United Nations, 1939-1946*. London: Martin Robertson, 1976.
- Ritchie, Charles. *The Siren Years, A Canadian Diplomat Abroad, 1937-1945*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1974.
- Skilling, H. Gordon. *Canadian Representation Abroad, From Agency to Embassy*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1945.
- Smith, Henry Ladd. *Airways Abroad: The Story of American World Air Routes*. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1950.
- Soward, F.H. *Canada in World Affairs, From Normandy to Paris, 1944-46*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1950.
- Spencer, Robert A. *Canada in World Affairs: From the United Nations to NATO, 1946-1949*. Issued under the auspices of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- Stacey, C.P. *Arms, Men and Governments: The War Policies of Canada, 1939-1945*. Published by the authority of the Minister of National Defence. Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Mackenzie King and the Atlantic Triangle*. The 1976 Joanne Goodman Lectures Delivered at the University of Western Ontario. Toronto: Macmillan, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Canada and the Age of Conflict: A History of Canadian External Policies, Vol. I, 1867-1921*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Canada and the Age of Conflict: The Mackenzie King Era, Vol. II, 1921-1948*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.
- Stairs, Denis. *The Diplomacy of Constraint: Canada, the Korean War and the United States*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.
- Thomson, Dale. *Louis St. Laurent: Canadian*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1967.



Vandenberg, Arthur H., Jr. *The Vandenberg Papers*. With the collaboration of Joe Alex Morris. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952.

Veatch, Richard. *Canada and the League of Nations*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975.

Wigley, Philip G. *Canada and the Transition to Commonwealth; British-Canadian Relations, 1917-1926*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Willoughby, W.R. *The Joint Organization of Canada and the United States*. With a foreword by John W. Holmes. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

Woodbridge, George et al. *UNRRA: The History of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration*. 3 vols. New York: Columbia University Press, 1950.

Woodward, Sir Llewellyn in collaboration with Lambert, M.E. *British Foreign Policy in the Second World War*. Vol. 5. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1976.

## II. ARTICLES

Acheson, Dean. "Canada: 'Stern Daughter of the Voice of God'" in Merchant, Livingston (ed.). *Neighbours Taken for Granted: Canada and the United States*. Toronto: Burn and MacEachern, 1966.

Anglin, Douglas G. "United States Opposition to Canadian Membership in the Pan American Union: A Canadian View." *International Organization* XV (January 1961): 1-20.

---

. "Lester Pearson and the Office of the Secretary General." *International Journal* XVII (Spring 1962): 145-50.

Angus, H.F. "The Canadian Constitution and the UN Charter." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* XII (May 1946): 127-135.

Aronsen, Lawrence. "Imperialism and Dependency: Some Reflections on Canadian-American Economic Relations, 1945-1957." *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* IV (April 1980): 23-37.

Armstrong, Hamilton Fish. "Europe Revisited." *Foreign Affairs* 25(July 1947): 537-549.

Bothwell, R.D. and English, John. "Dirty Work at the Crossroads: New Perspectives on the Riddell Incident." *Canadian Historical Association Report* (1972): 283-285.

---

. "Canadian Trade Policy in the Age of American Dominance and British Decline, 1943-1947." *The Canadian Review of American Studies VIII* (Spring 1974): 52-65.

Bothwell, Robert and Granatstein, J.L. "Canada and the Wartime Negotiations on Civil Aviation: The Functional Principle in Operation." *The International History Review II* (October 1980): 585-601.

Carter, Gwendolen M. "The Evolving Commonwealth." *International Journal IV* (Summer 1949): 261-271.

Cecil, Robert. "Legends Spies Tell: A Reappraisal of the Absconding Diplomats." *Encounter I* (April 1978): 9-17.

Claxton, Brooke. "The Place of Canada in Post-War Organization." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science X* (November 1944): 409-421.

---

. "Canada at the Paris Conference." *International Journal II* (Spring 1947): 124-131.

Eagleton, Clyde. "The Share of Canada in the Making of the United Nations." *The University of Toronto Law Journal VII* (Spring 1948): 329-56.

Eggleston, Wilfrid. "The Report of the Royal Commission on Espionage." *Queen's Quarterly* (Autumn 1946): 369-378.

Fay, Terence. "The Proposed Canada-United States Customs Union 1947-1948: A Bold and Striking Plan." *Bulletin of Canadian Studies IV*, No. 1 (April 1980): 38-53.

Fox, Grace. "The Origins of UNRRA." *Political Science Quarterly LXV* (Spring 1950): 561-585.

Friedman, Max. "The General Assembly." *International Journal II* (Spring 1947): 106-117.

Gelber, Lionel. "The Commonwealth and the United Nations." *Behind the Headlines XIII*, No. 5 (October 1953).



- Gibson, James. "Root and Branch in Canadian Foreign Policy, 1938-1947." *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* V (October 1981): 48-62.
- Glazebrook, G.P. de T. "Canadian Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century." *Journal of Modern History* XXI (March 1949): 44-55.
- Goodrich, Leland M. "From League of Nations to United Nations." *International Organization* I (February 1947): 3-21.
- Granatstein, J.L. and Bothwell, Robert. "'A Self-Evident National Duty': Canadian Foreign Policy, 1935-1939." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* III (January 1975): 212-233.
- Hammond, Thomas T. "'Atomic Diplomacy' Revisited." *Pacific* XIX (Winter 1976): 1403-1428.
- Harbron, J.D. "Canada and the Organization of American States." *Canadian-American Committee*. Sponsored by the National Planning Association (US) and the Private Planning Association (Canada), 1963.
- Hilliker, J.F. "No Bread at the Peace Table: Canada and the European Settlement, 1943-1947." *Canadian Historical Review* LXI (March 1980): 69-86.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Canadian Government and the Free French: Perceptions and Constraints, 1940-1944." *International History Review* II (January 1980): 87-108.
- Hillmer, Norman. "A British High Commissioner for Canada, 1927-28." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* I (May 1973): 339-356.
- Hitchens, F.H. "The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan." *The Roundel* II (December 1949): 5-13.
- Hodgetts, J.E. "The San Francisco Conference." *University of Toronto Quarterly* (June 1945): 431-440.
- Holmes, John W. "The Study of Diplomacy: A Sermon." *Occasional Paper*, The Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University (June 1973).

- Holmes, John W. "The Changing Nature of International Organizations: The Canadian Perspective." *Canada House Lecture Series* No. 8 (November 8, 1979).
- Ignatieff, George. "General A.G.L. McNaughton: A Soldier in Diplomacy." *International Journal* XXII (Summer 1967): 402-425.
- Keenleyside, H.L. "The Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence, 1940-1945." *International Journal* XVI (Winter 1960-1): 50-77.
- Keirstead, B.S. "Canada at the Cross Roads in Foreign Policy." *International Journal* III (Spring 1948): 97-110.
- Kennan, George. ("X"). "The Sources of Soviet Conduct." *Foreign Affairs* (July 1947): 566-582.
- Knox, F.A. "Some Aspects of Canada's Post-War Export Problem." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* X (August 1944): 312-327.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Canada's Balance of International Payments, 1940-1945." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* XIII (August 1947): 345-362.
- Langlais, Antonio. "Charte de Nations Unies et le Canada." *Canada Français* XXXIII (Octobre 1945): 129-34.
- LePan, Douglas. "Portrait of Norman Robertson: The Spare Deputy." *International Perspectives* (August 1978): 3-8.
- Lower, A.R.M. "Canada, the Second Great War and the Future." *International Journal* I (Spring 1946): 97-111.
- MacDonald, Malcolm. "Canada, A New Moral Force in the World." *International Journal* I (Spring 1946): 159-163.
- MacKay, R.A. "Canada and the Balance of World Power." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* VII (May 1941): 229-243.
- Mackintosh, W.A. "The Problem of the United Nations." *Queen's Quarterly* LIV (Spring 1947): 90-99.



McEvoy, Fred. "Canadian-Irish Relations during the Second World War." *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* V (January 1977): 206-226.

McKim, Anson C. "World Order in Air Transport." *International Journal* II (Summer 1947): 226-236.

Mansergh, Nicholas. "Strains on the Commonwealth." *Foreign Affairs* XXVII (October 1948): 129-142.

Massey, Vincent. "Should Canada Join the Pan-American Union?" *Maclean's* (15 Aug. 1947): 22, 44-47.

Maurault, Olivier. "Esquisse de relations inter-américaines." *International Journal* I (Autumn 1946): 317-323.

Miller, A.J. "The Functional Principle in Canada's External Relations." *International Journal* XXXV (Spring 1980): 309-328.

Miller, J.D.B. "The Decline of Inter Se." *International Journal* XXIV (Autumn 1969): 765-775.

Morton, W.L. "Canada and Foreign Affairs." *Canadian Historical Review* XVIII (June 1947): 178-96.

Munton, Don and Page, Don. "Planning in the East Block: The Post-Hostilities Problems Committees in Canada, 1943-45." *International Journal* XXXII (Autumn 1977): 687-726.

Page, Donald M. "Canadian Images of the Cold War, 1946-7." *International Journal* XXXII (Summer 1977): 577-604.

Pearson, Lester B. "Canada and the Post-War World." *Canadian Affairs* I, No. 23 (April 1, 1944): 1-11.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Canada Looks Down North." *Foreign Affairs* XXIV (July 1946): 638-647.

Pierce, S.D. and Plumptre, A.F.W. "Canada's Relations with Wartime Agencies in Washington." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* (August 1945): 402-19.

Podea, Iris S. "Pan American Sentiment in French Canada." *International Journal* III (Autumn 1948): 334-348.

Read, John E. "Problems of an External Affairs Legal Adviser, 1928-1946." *International Journal* XXII (Summer 1967): 376-394.

Reid, Escott. "Canada and the Threat of War: A Discussion of Mr. Mackenzie King's Foreign Policy." *University of Toronto Quarterly* VI (January 1937): 242-253.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Mr. Mackenzie King's Foreign Policy." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* III (February 1937): 86-97.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Birth of the North Atlantic Alliance." *International Journal* XXIII (Summer 1967): 426-440.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Conscience of the Diplomat: A Personal Testament." *Queen's Quarterly* LXXIV (Winter 1967-68).

\_\_\_\_\_. "Memories of Louis St. Laurent 1946-9." In *On Canada: Essays in Honour of Frank H. Underhill*, pp. 71-82. Edited by Norman Penlington. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Canada and the Creation of the North Atlantic Alliance, 1948-1949." In *Freedom and Change: Essays in Honour of Lester B. Pearson*. Edited by Michael G. Fry. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1975.

Scott, F.R. "A Policy of Neutrality for Canada?" *Foreign Affairs* 17 (January 1939): 402-416.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The End of Dominion Status." *American Journal of International Law* 38 (1944): 34-49.

Smith, I. Norman. "San Francisco - First Step to Peace." *Behind the Headlines* V, No. 6 (September 1945).

Stacey, C.P. "The Canadian-American Permanent Joint Board on Defence 1939-1945." *International Journal* IX (Spring 1954): 107-124.

Trotter, Reginald. "Bigwin and the Changing Commonwealth." *International Journal* V (Winter 1945-50): 22-30.



Urquhart, M.C. "Post-War International Trade Arrangements." *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science* XIV (August 1948): 373-385.

Vlastos, Gregory. "Canadian Socialists and the USSR." *Canadian Forum* (September 1945): 131-134.

Warner, Edward. "Airways for Peace." *Foreign Affairs* 22 (October 1943): 11-28.

Wigley, Philip. "Beyond the North Atlantic Triangle: Canadian-American Relations, 1945-1970." *Bulletin of Canadian Studies* IV (April 1980): 5-22.

Wilgress, Dana. "From Siberia to Kuibyshev: Reflections on Russia, 1919-1943." *International Journal* XXII (Summer 1967): 364-375.

Wilson, K.R. "Geneva and the ITO." *International Journal* II (Summer 1947): 242-249.

### III. MANUSCRIPT AND UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Gibson, James A. "Some Little Time: A Personal Memoir." Unpublished manuscript.

Granatstein, J.L. "Civil Servant: Norman Robertson and the Making of Canadian Foreign Policy." Draft manuscript of *A Man of Influence*, *op cit*.

Hilliker, J.F. "Distant Ally: Canadian Relations with Australia during the Second World War." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Halifax, June 1981.

Holmes, John W. "The Shaping of Peace." Vol. II. Unpublished manuscript, *op.cit*.

Little, John Michael. "Canada Discovered: Continentalist Perceptions of the Roosevelt Administration, 1939-1945." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 1975.

Lougheed, Judith H. "The Canadian Role in the Development of Atomic Energy, 1942-1946." M.A. Thesis, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs, Carleton University, Ottawa. 1980.

Merrick, John R. "Canada and the Origin of the United Nations, 1941-1945." M.A. Thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, 1974.

Pruessen, Ronald W. "The Dulles Perspective on Canada Before 1953." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Montreal, June 1980.

Welles, Sumner. "Cooperation Between Canada and the United States in the Search for World Peace." The J.W. Dafoe Foundation, 1946.